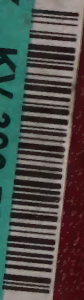


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1X  
ONE HUNDRED LECTURES

ON

GOD, THE CREATOR.

THE CREATION,

ASTRONOMY, PHILOSOPHY, THE DELUGE,

COLENSO, CUMMING, THE CLASSICS,

THE POETS AND THE HEATHEN MYTHOLOGY,

DOWN TO THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

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BY

B. C. JONES.

THIRD SERIES, CONTAINING NINE LECTURES.

LONDON:

W. H. ALLEN & CO., WATERLOO PLACE.

1863.

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*Price 8s. 6d.*



*London, May 20, 1863.*

TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE THE LORD BROUGHAM AND VAUX.

MY LORD,

In acknowledging your Lordship's kindness and courteous consideration, and at the same time thanking you for the favourable manner in which you have expressed your opinion of my humble efforts as an author, I think I cannot do better than express my sense of the high honour you have conferred upon me than by dedicating this work to your Lordship. I do so with great pleasure; because, to be a philosopher must be to be a man, and as none living better deserves that appellation in its truest sense than your Lordship, it is most gratifying to me having the opportunity to add another record of the fact.

It may be some satisfaction, my Lord, my stating that my Lord Lyndhurst has recently sent me a message that I am at liberty to use his name "how I like" in regard to my work. This is an additional satisfaction; but does not in any degree lessen the obligation I am under to my Lord Brougham, but rather a confirmation of your Lordship's shrewd appreciation of the efforts of a comparatively obscure literary man.

I beg, my Lord,

With all manly respect,

To subscribe myself

Your Lordship's, most faithfully and obediently,

BEN CHARLES JONES.





## LECTURE XX.

---

Have patience, kind friends, and if I venture too deeply to fathom the posthumous thoughts of the great and unrivalled genius of our immortal Shakspeare—have patience, I say ; bear with me, be generous, nor attribute presumption to the humble genius now addressing you. Strange things before now have come to light ; even

“ Stones have been known to move, and trees to speak.”

Nay, start not, my friends, nor look amazed at my telling you that I have discovered when William Shakspeare first conceived his idea of writing the tragedy of “ Hamlet.” It was, and must have been, when he was reading the tragedy I am now going to treat upon—Euripides’ “ Electra.” My showing this will in a measure confirm a notion I have long entertained and expressed upon many occasions publicly, that it is a calumny on the memory of our poet to indulge in the idea (as many people do) that he was not acquainted with the classics. There is a well-founded opinion that Shakspeare received many notions from reading ancient books, and that he often amalgamated matter from various sources, and frequently so produced some of his matchless plays. Of all the annotators upon Shakspeare, I find but

one (Mr. Chalmers) who admits that Shakspeare knew something of Greek, for he says that he was known to have read "The Destruction of Troy." A certain critic has recently honoured me by saying that my lectures are having the effect of teaching thousands of people something about authors they never read of before. I dare say that remark was true, and it is a pleasing task to myself in accomplishing the object. It will be still further satisfactory when I succeed, as I shall, in convincing those who "know all about the ancient authors" that the aspersion so frequently cast upon our Shakspeare respecting his ignorance of the Greek language is altogether an error; for if he did not gain some of his ideas for his tragedy of "Hamlet" from reading Euripides' "Electra," he never wrote "Hamlet" at all. It may be argued that some one might have translated the Greek for him into English. This might have been the case, but my impression is that his interpretations are conceived from the Greek, and that he knew a great deal more about the classics than he has had credit given him for. There are so many sentences in the two plays I am alluding to so similar that it is out of the pale of reason to imagine two people were ever inspired with so many of the same thoughts at one time; for what confirms my notion is that all the comparisons I am about drawing occur in the two plays in question. It is not as if the ideas were diffused through several plays; they all appear in "Electra" and in "Hamlet." Now, not to be prosy, nor to carry you deeper into Shakspeare than is actually necessary for my present object, I will confine my remarks to the comparisons I am about making; and perhaps the sooner I come to them, the more readily I shall satisfy your curiosity. With this preface I will proceed at once to relate to you that Euripides' tragedy of "Electra" is one of the sequels to the

catastrophe of the real or supposed amour between Helena and Paris. After writing his tragedy of "The Trojan Dames," in which he describes the fall of Troy, it is remarkable how ingeniously Euripides has devised his plan to keep up the same story. In this instance, I think, he has developed one of the most successful efforts upon record of that character in which the Greek poets were wont to delight—viz., producing several tragedies upon the same subject. In "Iphigenia at Aulis" we have the setting out of the expedition, and the setting down before the walls of Troy. In this piece the characters of Agamemnon and Menelaus are two of the most important. In "Rhesus," which follows, although both Agamemnon and Menelaus are important to the plot and frequently alluded to, neither character appears; and this is arranged so well that the economy of the plot does not suffer. Then, in the "Trojan Dames," Menelaus only appears, with equal success. After this, in "Hecuba" (to keep up a balance of interest between the two characters) we find only Agamemnon; then, again, in "Helena," Menelaus only; and now in "Electra," although Agamemnon is dead, he is represented by his son, Orestes. These facts would in a great measure lead us to suppose that the poet had the whole of his plans laid out when he at first commenced writing upon the subject. We find that one of the leading features in the characters of the ancient races was a desire for revenge, or blood for blood. Shakspeare says, "Blood will have blood," but he uses the expression in the sense of Divine retribution, where Macbeth reflects upon the consequences likely to accrue to himself through the crimes he has committed; but Euripides makes it more the impulse and development of the human passions, and in no instance is it more fully carried out than in the tragedy of "Electra;" for in this piece Agamemnon's chil-

dren, Orestes and Electra, not only assassinate their father's murderer, Ægisthus, but they destroy their own mother, Clytemnestra, because that she had a hand in their father's death. These murders are done entirely and avowedly as acts of vengeance, although it is made to appear afterwards that the gods sanctioned the deeds. Now, to conclude this preface, I will at once proceed with Euripides' tragedy by describing the characters represented. Orestes (now grown to manhood, was introduced in "Iphigenia at Aulis" as a child); Electra (spoken of in "Iphigenia at Aulis," as one of Agamemnon's youngest daughters left at Argos, in Clytemnestra's care); Auturgus (husband to Electra); Pylades (friend to Orestes)—(and here I may mention that I think Shakespeare had these two in his mind when he wrote the characters of Hamlet and Horatio); Tutor (the faithful servant of Agamemnon and his children); Castor and Pollux (as planets, in similar manner as introduced in the tragedy of "Helena"); a Messenger; and the Chorus (consisting of the Mycenæan virgins). The scene is laid on the verge of the Argive dominions, in a mountainous district, before the cottage of Auturgus, who is a small farmer on his own account. He is described merely as a husbandman or a peasant, but his real position is as here stated. He is a faithful adherent to the dynasty of the murdered King, Agamemnon, and shows his fidelity by his respect to, and the honour he bears, his wife Electra. It must be understood that when Agamemnon set out from Argolis, with the expedition for Troy, he left at his house his wife Clytemnestra, Iphigenia, and Electra, his daughters (in the play of "Iphigenia at Aulis" we are led to suppose that there was another daughter, for Agamemnon speaks to his wife, telling her that her duty calls her to Argos to see after her other daughter, but as we have only the names of these two we will treat the history accord-



ingly), his son Orestes, and his cousin, Ægisthus (as guardian to his house and family). Iphigenia, at this period, was a grown young woman, Electra in her girlhood, and Orestes, a mere child. We do not find that any improper intimacy existed between Ægisthus and Clytemnestra previous to her setting out for Aulis, with Iphigenia and Orestes, to meet Agamemnon, but immediately on her return with Orestes it would seem that an adulterous intercourse ensued, which resulted in the birth of other children. These circumstances, combined with Ægisthus's being in a position to assume authority and exercise the power of the sovereign of the State, induced him to conspire with Clytemnestra to assassinate Agamemnon on his return to Argos. This they accomplished, and now Ægisthus's attention is turned to securing himself upon the throne; to this end he considers it necessary to get Orestes and Electra out of the way. His designs are to destroy Orestes and marry Electra to a low-born peasant, so as to preclude the probability of the people adopting her sons (should she have any) for their kings. Here we find the peculiar interest of the plot commencing. Orestes is saved by Tutor (an old attendant and guardian of Agamemnon's youth), who carries him out of Ægisthus's reach to Strophius, in Phocis, and Electra is saved from the consequences of the intended degradation cast upon her, as she finds in her husband Auturgus not only the son of a higher class of people than was anticipated, but a true friend and a man of honour, scorning to take advantage of the power he is entitled to use; for we find that his reverence for Electra's high birth induces him to treat her with respect, and he leaves her mistress of her purity. We do not find that Clytemnestra intended to have any hand in the proposed murder of her son Orestes, nor do we find anything to confirm us in the belief



that she was averse to it. Of the two, inferences rather lead us to suppose she contemplated something of the sort, for when Electra accuses her mother of her crimes, Clytemnestra endeavours to justify herself through Agamemnon's intimacy with Cassandra, and for his consenting to the sacrifice of Iphigenia. "Suppose," says she, "I had destroyed your brother Orestes." Now, I do not say that these words convey any intention of the kind on her part, but they have a tendency to induce us to think she would not particularly object to its being done, were it not for public abhorrence. The play commences by Auturgus's describing the particulars of it. After he has spoken, Electra enters, and says,—

"O dark-brow'd night, nurse of the golden stars,  
"In thee this vase sustaining on my head  
"I to the flowing river bend my steps,  
"(Not by necessity to this compell'd,  
"But to the gods to show the insolent wrongs  
"I suffer from Ægisthus), and my griefs  
"For my lost father to the wide extent  
"Of æther breathe : \* for from the royal house  
"Me my destructive mother hath driv'n forth,  
"To gratify her husband : having borne  
"To' Ægisthus other children, she hath made  
"Me and Orestes outcasts from the house.

"AUTURGUS.

"Why wilt thou thus, unhappy lady, toil,  
"For my sake bearing labours, nor desist  
"At my desire ? Not thus hast thou been train'd.

---

\* I am not forced to work by my husband, but I do it to show the gods and all people who are drawing the breath of life, the indignity I am enduring through the wrongs put upon me by Ægisthus ; also the grief I feel for the loss of my father.

## "ELECTRA.

"Thee equal to the gods I deem my friend ; \*  
 "For in my ills thou hast not treated me  
 "With insult. In misfortunes thus to find,  
 "What I have found in thee, a gentle pow'r  
 "Lenient of grief, † must be a mighty source  
 "Of consolation. It behoves me then,  
 "Far as my pow'r avails, to ease thy toils, ‡  
 "That lighter thou may'st feel them, and to share  
 "Thy labour, though unbidden : in the fields  
 "Thou hast enough of work ; be it my task  
 "Within to order well. The lab'rer, tired  
 "Abroad, with pleasure to his house returns,  
 "Accustom'd all things gratefull there to find.

## "AUTURGUS.

"Go then, since such thy will : nor distant far  
 "The fountain from the house. At the first dawn  
 "My bullocks yoked I to the field will drive,  
 "And sow my furrows : for no idle wretch,  
 "With the gods always in his mouth, can gain  
 "Without due labour the support of life.

(*Enter Orestes and Pylades.*)

## "ORESTES.

"O Pylades, thee first of all mankind  
 "Faithfull and friendly I esteem ; alone  
 "Hast thou receiv'd Orestes, held me high  
 "In thy dear love, thus with misfortunes press'd,  
 "And suff'ring, as I suffer, dreadful ills,  
 "Wrought by Ægisthus, whose accursed hand,

\* You, my friend, for your kindness to me, I worship with equal reverence as I do the gods.

† Gentle and kind to me, on account of my griefs.

‡ As you are so kind to me, it is my duty to make return, in helping you as much as lies in my power.

" And my destructive mother join'd her aid,  
 " Murder'd my father. But the Argive soil,  
 " Commanded by the god's oracular voice,  
 " No mortal conscious to my steps, I tread,  
 " His murder on his murd'ers to avenge.  
 " This night my father's tomb have I approach'd,  
 " Pour'd the warm tear, presented my shorn locks,  
 " And offer'd on the pyre the victim's blood,  
 " Secret from those who lord it o'er this land.  
 " The walls I enter not, a double charge  
 " At once comprizing, to the Argive bounds  
 " I come, that by the tyrant's spies if known  
 " I to another's realms may soon retire ;  
 " And seek my sister ; for they say that here  
 " In marriage join'd she dwells, a virgin now  
 " No more : with her I would hold converse, her  
 " Take my associate in this deed, and learn  
 " All that hath pass'd within the walls. But now,  
 " For now the grey morn opes her radiant eye,  
 " Retire we from this public path : perchance  
 " Some ploughman, or some female slave, from whom  
 " We may gain knowledge, may in sight appear.  
 " And see, a female slave, her tresses shorn,  
 " Bears from the spring her vase : sit we awhile,  
 " And question her, if haply from her words  
 " We may learn aught for which we hither came."

Now having read this speech to you, I will show the  
 similarities existing between Euripides and Shakspeare.  
 Here Orestes says,—

" O Pylades, thee first of all mankind  
 " Faithful and friendly I esteem."

Hamlet and Horatio enter in very similar manner, and  
 Hamlet says,—

" Since my dear soul was mistress of her choice,  
 " And could of men distinguish her election,  
 " She hath seal'd thee for herself : "

## IN ELECTRA.

“ And suffering, as I suffer, dreadful ills,”

## IN HAMLET.

“ For thou hast been  
“ As one, in suffering all, that suffers nothing ;”

Compare this also to the following lines, which appears in “ Electra,” and see how entirely the sentiments blend :—

“ In misfortune thus to find,  
“ What I have found in thee, a gentle pow'r  
“ Lenient of grief.”

In “ Hamlet,” Ophelia in her madness sings of her father. In “ Electra” (when Electra appears as part of the Chorus) she also sings of her father. Electra alludes to the “ gorgeous vest ;” Hamlet to the “ gay trappings.” She speaks of “ vestments vile,” whilst he talks of his “ inky cloak,” and both of them express themselves as being tired of life. In Euripides’ Tragedy, Electra alludes to her brother and herself being driven forth from the royal house by their destructive mother, to gratify her husband. The same thing occurs in “ Hamlet,” for by Claudius (with Gertrude’s consent) Hamlet is enticed abroad, to be got out of the way, entirely with the same idea as in “ Electra,” which is not to remind the people (by his presence) of the murdered King. Electra speaks as follows :—

“ Glorifying in her impious deeds,  
“ My mother to her bed the blood-stain’d murd’rer leads.”

Hamlet says :—

“ O most wicked speed, to post  
“ With such dexterity to incestuous sheets.”

In “ Electra,” Orestes is the messenger to Electra of his

own wanderings ; whilst in "Hamlet" a sailor bears in a letter, which is read by Horatio, relating Hamlet's fruitless voyage and his return. Orestes says,—

"I first would speak what brings thee joy."

Electra replies,—

"Oh, be thou blest for these most grateful words !"

In "Hamlet," the sailor says,—

"God bless you, sir."

Horatio replies,—

"Let Him bless thee, too."

Electra speaks of the murderer as having usurped the regal sceptre ; Hamlet makes similar allusions, and they both talk of the usurper in a significant and contemptuous tone. Electra speaks of "My mother's husband ;" Hamlet speaks to his mother of her "husband's brother's wife." It is at a feast Orestes assassinates Ægisthus, and there is a carousing proceeding at the time Hamlet kills Claudius. When Electra and Orestes are pledging themselves to each other that they will be avenged upon their father's murderers, Electra says that she knows her father's spirit is hearing what they say ; whilst in "Hamlet," when the young Prince is making up his mind to find out the particulars of his father's death, the ghost is made to know what Hamlet's intentions are, for an admonition is heard to rise from the earth, commanding Horatio and Marcellus (whom Hamlet is enjoining to silence) to be attentive to the injunction he (Hamlet) is laying upon them. Hamlet con-



templates suicide, and determines to live only to avenge his father's death ; and Electra threatens to destroy herself in the event of Orestes's failing to accomplish the death of Ægisthus. She tells him to give a signal of how matters are proceeding ; whilst Hamlet directs Horatio to keep a watch upon Claudius.

Shakspeare makes Horatio so much an accomplice in the intended assassination of the King (Hamlet's uncle) that he is (at all events) aware of what Hamlet is going to do. In "Electra," Orestes says he will seek his sister to make her his "associate in the deed."

Hamlet is paving the way to tell Horatio of his intentions, whilst Orestes expresses his intention of telling Electra what he is going to do. In the one piece the murderer is the brother of the murdered King, in the other he is the cousin, and in both pieces a murderer has usurped the throne and has married a widowed Queen. In "Electra," an adulterous intercourse has taken place previous to the murder and the wife helped to murder the husband. In "Hamlet," if we have not the positive assertion to these ends, we have very strong inferences tending that way. My impression is that Shakspeare meant it to be understood that Claudius and Gertrude had been improperly intimate during the life of her first husband, and that she was cognizant of the fact of the poisoning. Now, the finish of the speech by Orestes carries us to the commencement of the grave scene ; here Hamlet and Horatio are again conversing by themselves, and in "Electra" Orestes and Pylades are in like manner alone. Hamlet sees the funeral of Ophelia approaching, and says,—

"Couch we awhile and mark."

Orestes, seeing Electra in a mean garb, takes her for a slave and says,—

“Retire we from this public path :

“Sit we awhile.”

In the same scene Hamlet says he will speak to the grave-digger, and in “Electra,” Orestes says he “will question the slave.” Now, I think that all these quotations are similar, by comparison ; and as, on one side, they nearly all occur in one speech, whilst, on the other hand, the corresponding sentences are nearly all contained in two speeches, and in both instances only the two characters are in conversation, my opinion is that Shakspeare got his above notions from Euripides’ “Electra,” and dressed them up for his own “Hamlet,” and I think that he purposely divided the notions he so gained from the one speech in “Electra” into two parts, for his “Hamlet,” with the idea that his doing so would tend to make the discovery by others less probable.

The Chorus now sing (led by Electra, who goes through all three movements, Strophe, Antistrophe, and Epod).

“ELECTRA (Strophe).

“Begin, begin, for this the hour,

“The mournfull measures weeping pour.\*

“Is there a wretch like me on earth ?

“The royal Agamemnon gave me birth,

“My mother Clytemnestra, shame

“Fall on that odious name !

---

\* There are two ways to interpret the meaning of this line ; it may allude to the earthen vessel which Electra is carrying. This description of utensil was made expressly to filter water, the process of which could be stopped at pleasure. Another interpretation may apply to a mournful measure of step to a solemn dance.

- " And me each tongue within Mycenæ's walls  
 " Th' unhappy, lost Electra calls.  
 " My soul to grief a prey,  
 " My hated\* life in anguish wastes away :  
 " My tears for thee, my father, flow,  
 " For in the shades below  
 " By curs'd Ægisthus and his barb'rous wife,  
 " Ah me, ah me, my miseries !  
 " Basely depriv'd of life,  
 " The royal Agamemnon lies.  
 " Yet once more raise the tearful strain,  
 " The sweetly-mournfull measures soothe my pain.†

## " ANTISTROPHE.

- " Begin, begin, for this the hour,  
 " The mournfull numbers weeping pour.‡  
 " Unhappy brother, in what state,  
 " What house is cruel servitude thy fate,  
 " Thy sister, in those rooms confin'd  
 " Once by her sire assign'd  
 " The chaste retirement of her happier years,  
 " Thy wretched sister left to tears,  
 " Tears which incessant flow  
 " From the deep anguish of severest woe ?  
 " O may'st thou come (O Jove, O Jove,  
 " Hear from thy throne above !)  
 " To soothe the pangs my tortur'd heart that rend :  
 " T' avenge thy father basely slain,  
 " May'st thou to Argos bend  
 " Thy weary, wand'ring foot again.—  
 " Take from my head this vase, that high  
 " May swell the mournfull nightly melody.—

---

\* This means that her existence is hateful to her ; the word *hated* would be more proper if used by a second person instead of by an individual making a self-allusion.

† This line applies to the verses which she herself is singing.

‡ Whilst she is singing she cannot help weeping also.

## " EPÔDE.

" The dismal song, the song of death,  
" To thee, my father, will I raise,  
" To thee among the shades beneath :  
" So pass my mournfull days.  
" For thee my bleeding breast I tear,  
" And beat my head, and rend my hair,  
" Shorn as an off ring to the dead :  
" Yes, poor Electra, beat thy head.  
" As some broad-rolling stream along,  
" For his lost father torn away,  
" Caught in the wily net a prey,  
" The tuneful cygnet pours the song ;\*  
" So thee, my father, I lament,  
" In thy last bath depriv'd of breath,  
" Stretch'd on the bed of death :  
" So I deplore the curst intent  
" Form'd 'gainst thy sad return from Troy,  
" The keen axe furious to destroy.  
" For thee no crown thy wife design'd,  
" No festive wreath thy brows to bind,  
" But the relentless trenchant sword ;  
" And, by her raging passions† led,  
" Aids the base murd'rer's deed abhor'd,  
" Then takes him to her bed.

## " CHORUS.

## " STROPHE 1ST.

" Daughter of Agamemnon, I with speed,  
" Electra, to thy rustic cottage fly ;  
" For one, whose herds on these rude mountains feed,  
" A swain, on whose good faith we firm rely,  
" Came, from Mycenæ came ;  
" The Argives, thus he says, proclaim

---

\* This alludes to a young swan, poetically described, weeping for its parent, which has been caught in a net.

† Ungovernable lasciviousness.

“ Three days of festal rites divine,  
 “ And all the virgins haste to Juno’s shrine.\*

“ ELECTRA.

“ STROPHE 2ND.

“ No more, my friends, the gorgeous vest,  
 “ Which in her happier hours Electra grac’d,  
 “ No more the gem in gold enchas’d,  
 “ With vivid radiance sparkling on my breast,  
 “ Delight my mind : my feet no more  
 “ The mazy-winding dance shall tread,  
 “ No more the train of Argive Virgins lead.  
 “ In tears, ah me ! I melt away ;  
 “ In tears, sad solace of each wretched day,  
 “ My ceaseless mis’ries I deplore.  
 “ My sordid toils these locks defile,  
 “ Around me see these vestments vile :  
 “ Of Agamemnon’s daughter this the fate !  
 “ Where now my father’s royal state ?  
 “ Where the proud glories of his name,  
 “ And Troy recording sad her conqueror’s mighty fame ?

“ CHORUS.

“ ANTISTROPHE 1ST.

“ Great is the goddess :† go then, with us go ;  
 “ Receive whate’er thy beauties may improve,  
 “ The gold, the vests with various dyes that glow.  
 “ Think’st thou with tears th’ unhonour’d gods to move ?  
 “ Not won by sighs their aid,  
 “ But by pure vows with rev’reuce paid,  
 “ The gods, to crush thy foes, will send,  
 “ And blessings on thy future days t’ attend.

---

\* Juno was supposed to have been born at Argos, where a shrine was established to her honour, and monthly sacrifices made to her. Hercules was put to Juno’s breast whilst she was sleeping, in consequence of which her milk overflowed the heavens, to which poets have ascribed the phenomenon which we call the “milky-way.”

† Juno.



“ ELECTRA.

“ ANTISTROPHE 2ND.

“ My cries, my vows no god will hear,  
 “ Nor heeded they my father's spouting gore.  
 “ Ah me ! the murder'd I deplore,  
 “ And for the living exile pour the tear  
 “ He, distant from his native land,  
 “ Wanders, poor out-cast, o'er the earth,  
 “ And seeks mean refuge at some servile hearth,  
 “ Dragging from realm to realm his woes,  
 “ Though in his veins the blood of monarchs flows.  
 “ I, by oppression's iron hand  
 “ Driv'n from my father's royal seat,  
 “ Dwell in this low obscure retreat,  
 “ Here waste in toils my wretched life away,  
 “ Or o'er the rugged mountains stray :  
 “ Whilst, glorying in her impious deeds,  
 “ My mother to her bed the blood-stain'd murd'rer leads.

“ CHORUS.

“ The sister of thy mother, Helena,  
 “ Hath been the cause of many ills to Greece,  
 “ And to thy house.

“ ELECTRA.

“ Ah me ! ye female train,  
 “ My measures I break off : \* some strangers lodg'd,  
 “ Nigh to the cottage, from their ambush rise.  
 “ Fly by the path, I to the house will fly ;  
 “ Let us be swift t' escape their ruffian hands.”

Electra, seeing Orestes and Pylades, is about rushing into the cottage, when she is stayed by Orestes, who tells her to fear nothing from him, that he is the bearer of a message from her brother (she does not know him, because when

---

\* I cease singing.

they were parted both were young). Orestes sounds Electra relative to her feelings regarding her mother and Ægisthus, to which she replies in the following lines:—

“ ELECTRA.

“ I would speak, if I might ; and to a friend  
“ May I not speak my suffering father's wrongs,  
“ And mine ? But, stranger, since to this discourse  
“ Thou dost enforce me, I conjure thee tell  
“ Orestes his calamities, and mine.  
“ Tell him in what mean garb thou seest me clad,  
“ How sordid, and beneath what lowly roof,  
“ Born as I was to royalty, I lodge.  
“ I, labouring at the loom the lengthen'd robe,  
“ Shall want the vest to clothe my nakedness :  
“ And, bearing water from the flowing fount,  
“ No more partaker of the feast, no more  
“ My self a virgin, 'midst the virgin train  
“ Leading the dance, to them I bid adieu,  
“ To Castor also bid adieu, to whom,  
“ E'er to the gods advanc'd, I was betroth'd,  
“ As from the same illustrious lineage sprung.  
“ Meantime my mother 'midst the Phrygian spoils  
“ Sits on her throne, the Asiatic dames,  
“ Made by my father's conquest slaves, attend  
“ Her state, their rich Idæan vests confin'd  
“ With clasps of gold, my father's cloddied gore  
“ Yet putrid in the house ; and the same car  
“ In which my father rode, his murderer mounts ;  
“ The sceptre, ensign of his kingly sway  
“ O'er Greece in arms confederate, he with pride  
“ Grasps in his bloody hands. The monarch's tomb  
“ Unhonour'd nor libations hath receiv'd,  
“ Nor myrtle bough ; no hallow'd ornament  
“ Hath dignified the pyre : inflam'd with wine  
“ My mother's husband, the illustrious lord,  
“ For so they call him, tramples on the earth  
“ Insultingly where Agamemnon lies ;

" And hurling 'gainst his monument a stone,  
 " Thus taunts us with proud scorn, ' Where is thy son,  
 " ' Orestes where ? right noble is thy tomb  
 " ' Protected by his presence.' Thus he mocks  
 " The absent : but, O stranger, tell him this,  
 " Suppliant I beg thee. Many give the charge,  
 " And I interpret it ;\* my hands, my tongue,  
 " My mind desponding with its grief, my head  
 " Shorn of its tresses, and his father. Shame,  
 " Base shame it were if, when his father's arm  
 " Subdued the Trojans, he should want the pow'r  
 " Alone to hurl his vengeance on one man,  
 " Now in youth's prime, and from a nobler sire."

The message on the part of Electra is sent with a view of inciting Orestes to avenge Agamemnon's death. Hereupon Auturgus enters, and seeing Electra in conversation with two gentlemen, he says that it ill becomes a woman of honour to be seen standing with strangers ; to which Electra beseeches him to harbour no suspicion, as he shall be made acquainted with their conversation, for they are friends sent by Orestes to see her—they say he is living, and what they have communicated to me I put implicit faith in. To this Auturgus says,—

" What say they ? Lives he ? Is he yet a man ?  
 " Remembers he his father, and thy wrongs ?

The meaning of these lines is What, is he still living ? and does he consider himself a man to be thus absent whilst such abominations are going on in the kingdom of his ancestors ? does he remember his father and thy wrongs ? will he not come and see justice done thee ? Electra and Orestes listen

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\* Many reasons there are for this charge which I send to Orestes. I will explain them.

to the remarks of Auturgus with respect and admiration, appreciating the sincerity of purpose by which he is actuated. She excuses her brother's apparent neglect by reminding Auturgus that Orestes is an exile, and consequently stands in a weak position. Being satisfied with this explanation, Auturgus asks Orestes and Pylades to enter his house and partake of what hospitality it is in his power to afford them. Orestes is at once prepossessed in favour of his brother-in-law, and makes the following most just and philosophical remarks :—

“ Now by the gods, is this the man, who holds  
 “ Thy marriage in such holy reverence ?  
 “ Nature hath giv'n no outward mark to note  
 “ The generous mind : the qualities of men  
 “ To sense are indistinct.\* I oft have seen  
 “ One of no worth a noble father shame,  
 “ And from vile parents worthy children spring,  
 “ Meanness oft grov'ling in the rich man's mind,  
 “ And oft exalted spirits in the poor.  
 “ How then discerning shall we judge aright ?  
 “ By riches ? ill would they abide the test : †  
 “ By poverty ? on poverty awaits  
 “ This ill, through want it prompts to sordid deeds : ‡  
 “ Shall we pronounce by arms ? but who can judge,

\* You cannot tell by men's appearance if they are *sensible* or not. This is the literal meaning of the sentence, but as Orestes is alluding to the respectful behaviour of Auturgus towards Electra holding her birth and connections in such high reverence, the correct interpretation to put upon his meaning is, you cannot discover men's *sensibility* of nature by their outward garb.

† You cannot tell by appearances what men are ; neither the outward garb nor the looks can be relied upon as an unerring test ; often the most fair-looking are most foul, and the uncouth in appearance pure of soul.

‡ Men once poor grow poorer, and are thus prompted to mean acts ; necessity drives them into errors.

" By looking on the spear, the dauntless heart ?\*  
 " Such judgment is fallacious : for this man,  
 " Nor great among the Argives, nor elate  
 " With the proud honours of his house, his rank  
 " Plebeian, hath approv'd his liberal heart.  
 " Will you not learn wisdom, you whose minds  
 " Error with false presentments† leads astray ?  
 " Will you not learn by manners and by deeds  
 " To judge the noble ? Such discharge their trust  
 " With honour to the state, and to their house :  
 " Mere flesh, without a spirit, is no more  
 " Than statues in the forum : nor in war  
 " Doth the strong arm the dang'rous shock abide  
 " More than the weak : on nature‡ this depends,  
 " And an intrepid mind. But we accept  
 " Thy hospitable kindness ; for the son  
 " Of Agamemnon, for whose sake we come,  
 " Present or not, is worthy :§ to this house  
 " Go, my attendants ; I must enter it ;  
 " This man, though poor, more cheerful than the rich  
 " Receives me ; to his kindness thanks are due.||  
 " More would it joy me if thy brother, blest  
 " Himself, could lead me to his prosperous house :  
 " Yet haply he may come ; th' oracular voice

\* Shall we judge of a man's dauntless courage by looking at the armour he has on, or by the appearance of the spear in his hand ?

† Appearances.

‡ Courage is here meant.

§ "Present or not is worthy" means it is equally worthy (or praiseworthy) in thee, thy acting thus hospitably ; Orestes being present or not, he will appreciate your good intentions.

|| I cannot reject such generous, unsophisticated kindness. Go, lead the way. This honest man's hospitality is of that unostentatious character that it would be ingratitude in me not to accept it. This welcome reception is most cheering, yet would it be more so were Orestes inheriting his ancestral home. Happily, this may be shortly, for the Oracle at the shrine of Phœbus has declared it ; yet I hold but little faith in these human prophecies.



"Of Phœbus firmly will be ratified :  
 "Lightly of human prophecies I deem,"\*

Orestes and his friends enter the house, upon which Electra asks her husband why, for her sake (knowing his own poverty), does he incur the expense of entertaining such high people as their visitors are ; and she asks him if he will serve her by fetching hither Tutor, who was her father's guardian. Him you'll find, says she, near the river Tanus, which divides the States of Argos and Sparta. Auturgus gladly consents to do his wife's bidding, and he desires her to enter the house and attend upon the strangers, as he has plenty there to entertain them for one day at least. Nature requires but little—a small quantity of food is sufficient for man, be he rich or poor. The scene is now taken up by the Chorus, during which period Electra is entertaining Orestes and his friend within the cottage, whilst Auturgus has gone to fetch Tutor, who now enters and says,—

"Where is my honour'd mistress, my lov'd child,  
 "Daughter of Agamemnon, once my charge ?†  
 "Steep to her house and difficult th' ascent ;  
 "With pain my age-enfeebled feet advance,  
 "Yet lab'ring onwards with bent knees I move  
 "To seek my friends. O daughter, for mine eyes

---

\* Here again we have one of Euripides' frequent expressions of contempt for the prophetic declaration so frequently resorted to in his time ; the meaning is, "I think nothing of the prognostications set forth by men, such as the decrees of Oracles and the like ; but if any reliance is to be placed upon one recently declared at the shrine of Phœbus, your brother will shortly be here."

† This pertains to Agamemnon, although it reads as if it was meant to apply to Electra. Tutor was a sort of governor to Agamemnon in his youthful days ; the name given to this character originates with Euripides ; because Agamemnon's guardian was his teacher, Euripides names him Tutor.

" Before the house behold thee, I am come  
 " Bringing this tender youngling from my fold,  
 " These garlands, from the vases these fresh curds,  
 " And this small flask of old and treasur'd wine  
 " Of gratefull odour ; scanty the supply,  
 " Yet, with aught weaker if allay'd, the cup  
 " Will yield a gratefull bev'rage. Let one bear  
 " Into the house these presents for thy guests.  
 " I with these tatter'd vests meanwhile will wipe  
 " Mine eyes, for they are wet with gushing tears.

" ELECTRA.

" Why, good old man, thus wet thy tearfull eyes ?  
 " After this length of time dost thou recall  
 " The memory of my ills ? or mourn the flight  
 " Of poor Orestes, or my father's fate,  
 " Whom, in thy hands sustaining, once thy care  
 " Nurtur'd, to thee and to thy friends in vain ?\*

" TUTOR.

" In vain : but this my soul could not support ;  
 " For to his tomb, as on the way I came,  
 " I turn'd aside, and falling on the ground,  
 " Alone and unobserv'd, indulg'd my tears ;†  
 " Then of the wine, brought for thy stranger guests,  
 " Made a libation, and around the tomb  
 " Plac'd myrtle branches ; on the pyre I saw  
 " A sable ewe, yet fresh the victim's blood,  
 " And clust'ring auburn locks shorn from some head :

\* The reason of Tutor's present poverty is here explained. "Are you weeping, Tutor, because all that you did for my father and brother has not proven beneficial to you or your family! Alas, my friend! all your cares for my poor father and brother have not proved of much advantage;" the sequel to her thoughts are "Alas, alas! this is to be attributed to the fallen state of Agamemnon and his children."

† It is in vain indeed. I could endure the thought of it no longer ; so, on my way hither, I went to Agamemnon's tomb and there poured out my grief.

"I marvel'd, O my child, what man had dar'd  
 "Approach the tomb, for this no Argive dares :\*  
 "Perchance with secret step thy brother came,  
 "And paid these honours to his father's tomb.  
 "But view these locks, compare them with thine own,  
 "Whether like thine their colour : nature loves  
 "In those who from one father draw their blood,  
 "In many points a likeness to preserve."

Here it must be supposed that Tutor produces the hair which has been plucked by Orestes from his head, in anguish, when at the tomb of Agamemnon. Electra takes the hair from Tutor's hand, and playfully derides the idea that, by simply comparing a handful of hair with that upon her head, they could discover if Orestes had been to Agamemnon's tomb or not. Besides, says she, even were the colour of our hair the same, his (he being a man) would naturally be coarser than mine. Then again, says she, it is absurd to imagine that a brother of mine would come hither secretly, fearing the usurper, Ægisthus. Even supposing that the hair which you have handed me and mine be identically the same, what proof is this that the former owner of it must be my brother; are not people's hair often alike, yet they not at all related? Tutor still urges the probability of Orestes having been at the tomb. Then says he—

"Where are these strangers? I would see them : much  
 "Touching thy brother wish I to inquire."

See, says Electra, they come; and Orestes (advancing) addresses Tutor thus :—

"Hail, hoary sire ! Electra, of what friend

---

\* The reason no Argive dare go to Agamemnon's tomb was because Ægisthus had decreed that they should not do so, his object being to prevent the people thinking of Agamemnon.

"Doth chance present us the rever'd remains ?\*  
 "Is this the man, who bore thy brother hence ?  
 "Why doth he scan me with that curious eye,  
 "As if inspecting some bright impress mark'd  
 "On silver † Some resemblance doth he trace ?  
 "Why wheels he round me thus ?"

During this speech Tutor is scrutinizing and recognizing Orestes. His gestures are of so singular a character that all present think him mad, and Electra says she is struck with wonder when the old man exclaims,—

"Look now on him, my child, that dearest youth.  
 "In him beholding Agamemnon's son."

Here Orestes is recognized by the old man through a scar he has over his eye, which is of a peculiar character, and was occasioned by a fall when he was a child. Electra and Orestes now embrace, and the chorus sing,—

"Yes, thou art come, O ling'ring day,  
 "At length art come, and beaming bright  
 "Show'st to Mycenæ's‡ state his glorious light,  
 "Who, from his father's palace chas'd,  
 "A wretched wand'rer long disgrac'd,  
 "Cheers us with his returning ray.  
 "Some god, some god, my royal friend,  
 "Back our own radiant Victory leads.  
 "Raise then thy hands, and to the skies  
 "Let for thy brother suppliant vows arise,

\* This is a roundabout way of expressing oneself, but the simple meaning is, "What aged friend have we here?"

† This would lead us to imagine that they chased on silver even in those days.

‡ Mycenæ, a town built by Perseus, who settled here in Peloponnesus instead of ascending the throne of Argos, which he refused on account of having had the misfortune of accidentally killing with a quoit Aerisius, who was his grandfather, the King of Argos.

"That, as with daring foot he treads,  
 "Success, success may on his steps attend.

"ORESTES.

"So may it be. With joy thy dear embrace  
 "I now receive : at length the time will come  
 "When it shall be repeated. But, old man,  
 "For opportune thy coming, tell me now  
 "What I shall do on this base murd'rer's head,  
 "And on my mother's who impurely shares  
 "His nuptial bed, t' avenge my father's death.  
 "Have I no friend at Argos ? not one left  
 "Benevolent ? are, with my fortunes, all  
 "Entirely lost ? to whom shall I apply ?  
 "Doth the night suit my purpose, or the day ?  
 "Or which shall I turn against my foes ?

"TUTOR.

"Amidst thy ruin'd fortunes, O my son,  
 "Thou hast no friend. Where shall the man be found  
 "Prompt in a prosp'rous or an adverse state\*  
 "Alike to share ? But learn this truth from me,  
 "For of thy friends thou wholly art bereft,  
 "Nor doth e'en hope remain, in thine own hand  
 "Now, and in fortune, thou hast all wherewith  
 "To gain thy father's house and regal state."

Tutor continues, and tells Orestes that he must kill his mother and her husband, Ægisthus. For this purpose came I hither, says Orestes, but how am I to accomplish it as his castle is guarded by soldiers ? As I came hither, says Tutor, I saw Ægisthus in a meadow close at hand ; he has gone forth to prepare a feast ; I saw some victims prepared ; he was with his domestics merely ; if you manage

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\* Equally sincere at all times whether he finds his friend in wealth or poverty.

so as to pass within his view during the bleeding of the victims, he will ask you to partake of the feast ; this will afterwards give you an opportunity of getting close to him ; as circumstances occur, so may you act. Your mother will also be at the feast, but she dreads being seen with Ægisthus abroad, so she prefers to attend with a separate train. If they be so far apart, how am I to take measures to kill them both ? says Orestes. Hereupon Electra interposes and says,—

“ I will form measures for my mother's death.”

Then, turning to Tutor, she asks him to go to Clytemnestra and tell her that her daughter, Electra, has given birth to a male child ;

“ Hearing my child-bed illness, she will come ;”

when certain death awaits her. First, you Tutor, conduct Orestes where Ægisthus is, for by his hand must the tyrant first bleed. Orestes is about following his guide, when he utters the following words, which are intended by the poet to show that the acts of Electra and Orestes are directed by the gods as a retribution :—

“ ORESTES.

“ God of my country, god of vengeance, Jove,

“ O pity us ! our sufferings pity claim.

“ Pity us, for our race from thee we draw !\*

“ And thou, whose altars at Mycenæ blaze,

“ Imperial Juno, give us victory,

“ If in a righteous cause we ask thy aid !

“ Oh give us to avenge our father's death !

“ And thou, my father, who beneath the earth

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\* This alludes to Jupiter's amour with Leda.



" Hast thy dark dwelling, through unholy deeds,  
 " (And thou, O Earth, to whom I stretch my hands,  
 " Great queen\*) protect thy children, O protect  
 " Thy most dear children : come, and with thee bring,  
 " To aid our cause, each mighty dead, that shook  
 " The spear with thee, and with thee conquer'd Troy !  
 " Hear'st thou so foully by my mother wrong'd,  
 " And all, the impious murderers who abhor ?

" ELECTRA.

" All this, I know, my father hears :† but now  
 " The time demands thee : go : by thy bold hand,  
 " I charge thee, let the vile Ægisthus die :  
 " For in the fatal contest shou'dst thou fall,  
 " My life too ends ; nor say thou that I live,  
 " For I will plunge the sword into my throat.  
 " This go I to prepare. If glad report  
 " Of thy success arrive, then all the house  
 " Shall echo to my joy : but shou'dst thou die,  
 " All otherwise. Thou hear'st what I resolve.

" ORESTES.

" I know it all.

" ELECTRA.

" In this behoves thee much  
 " To be a man.—Ye women, let your voice  
 " Give signal, like a flaming beacon, how  
 " The contest ends : I will keep watch within,  
 " Holding the keen sword ready in my hands ;

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\* This alludes to Juno, as the city of Argos was dedicated to her.

† The belief of the ancients was, that their departed friends demanded as their right, from their living kinsmen, that they should avenge their wrongs. So sacredly was this held an incumbent duty, that they invariably invoked their patron-god to assist them, or they conceived the notion that some other god prompted the wrong-doers to the ends of their schemes.

“For never shall my body from my foes,  
“If I must fall, indecent outrage bear.”\*

Here I end this Lecture.

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\* By this remark it is evident that Electra concludes that if Orestes fails, retribution will fall upon her as well as himself, for the attempt.

## LECTURE XXI.

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I left off in my former Lecture where Orestes leaves the stage with Tutor and Pylades, for the express purpose, as before avowed, viz., of assassinating Ægisthus; Electra also goes into the house. During their absence the Chorus sing, after which approaching sounds are heard, when Electra is called forth by the Chorus, and told that the noises are ill-omened and bodes a failure, upon which Electra is about destroying herself, but is restrained by the Chorus, when a messenger enters and addresses them as follows:—

“ MESSENGER.

“ To you, ye virgins of Mycenæ, joy  
“ I bring, to all his friends my message speaks;  
“ Orestes is victorious, on the ground  
“ Ægisthus, Agamemnon's murd'rer lies.  
“ Behoves you then address th' immortal gods.  
“ Departing from this house, the level road  
“ We enter'd soon mark'd by the chariot wheel  
“ On either side. Mycenæ's noble King  
“ Was there, amidst his gardens with fresh streams  
“ Irriguous walking, and the tender boughs  
“ Of myrtles, for a wreath to bind his head,  
“ He cropt; he saw us, he address'd us thus

" Aloud, ' Hail strangers : who are ye, and whence,  
 " ' Come from what country ? ' Then Orestes said,  
 " ' Thessalians ; victim to Olympian Jove  
 " ' We at the stream of Alpheus, go to slay.'  
 " The king, replied ' Be now my guests, and share  
 " ' The feast with me ; a bullock to the nymphs\*  
 " ' I sacrifice ; at morn's first dawn arise,  
 " ' Then you shall go : but enter now my house.'  
 " Thus as he spoke, he took us by the hand,  
 " And led us nothing loth : beneath his roof  
 " Soon as we came, he bade his slaves prepare  
 " ' Baths for the strangers, that the altars nigh,  
 " ' Beside the lustral ewers, they might stand :'  
 " Orestes then, With lavers from the pure  
 " And living stream we lately have been cleans'd :  
 " But with thy citizens these rites to share  
 " If strangers are permitted, we, O king,  
 " Are ready to thy hospitable feast  
 " Nothing averse. The converse here had end  
 " Their spears, with which they guard the king, aside  
 " Th' attendants laid ; and to their office all  
 " Apply'd their hands : some led the victim, some  
 " The basket bore, some rais'd the flames, and plac'd  
 " The caldrons on the hearth : the house resounds.  
 " Thy mother's husband on the altars cast  
 " The salted cakes, and thus address'd his vows,  
 " Ye Nymphs that haunt the rocks, these hallow'd rites  
 " Oft let me pay, and oft my royal spouse  
 " Now absent, both by fortune blest as now,  
 " And let our foes, as now, in ruin lie ;  
 " Thee and Orestes naming. But my lord  
 " Far other† vows address'd, but gave his words

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\* The Muses, festivals being held in their honour in Mycenæ. The messenger speaks of the nymphs alluded to by Ægisthus as those which "haunt the rocks;" by which it would seem that the ceremony is offered to the Nereides, but I am disposed to believe it alludes to the Muses, for the reason just described ; and that Ida's Mount, which the Muses frequented, was called the "Craggy Brow."

† Quite other prayers Orestes silently said.

" No utt'rance, to regain his father's house.  
 " Ægisthus then the sacrificing sword  
 " Took from the basket, from the bullock's front  
 " To cut the hair, which on the hallow'd fire  
 " With his right hand he threw, and as his slaves  
 " The victim held, beneath its shoulder plung'd  
 " The blade ; then turning to thy brother spoke,  
 " Amongst her noble arts Thessalia boasts  
 " To rein the fiery courser, and with skill  
 " The victim's limbs to sever : Stranger, take  
 " The sharp-edg'd steel, and show that fame reports  
 " Of the Thessalians truth : the Doric blade  
 " Of temper'd metal in his hand he grasp'd,  
 " And from his shoulders threw his gracefull robe ;  
 " Then to assist him in the toilsome task  
 " Chose Pylades, and bade the slaves retire :  
 " The victim's foot he held, and its white flesh,  
 " His hand extending, bared, and stript the hide  
 " E'er round the course the chariot twice could roll,  
 " And laid the entrails open : in his hands  
 " The fate-presaging parts Ægisthus took  
 " Inspecting : in the entrails was no lobe ;  
 " The valves and cells the gall containing show  
 " Dreadfull events to him, that view'd them, near :  
 " Gloomy his visage darken'd : but my lord  
 " Ask'd whence his sadden'd aspect ; he replied,  
 " Stranger, some treachery from abroad I fear ;  
 " Of mortal men Orestes most I hate,  
 " The son of Agamemnon ; to my house  
 " ' He is a foe.' ' Wilt thou,' replied my lord,  
 " ' King of this state, an exile's treachery dread ?  
 " ' But that, these omens leaving, we may feast,  
 " ' Give me a Phthian\* for this Doric blade,  
 " ' The breast asunder I will cleave : ' he took

---

\* The word is from Phthia, a town situate in Thessaly. The district was called Phthiotis, and produced a description of metal equal to Damascus steel.

" The steel, and cut. Ægisthus, yet intent,  
 " Parted the entrails ; and as low he bow'd  
 " His head, thy brother rising to the stroke  
 " Drove through his back the pond'rous axe, and riv'd  
 " The spinal joints ; his heaving body writh'd  
 " And quiver'd, struggling in the pangs of death.  
 " The slaves beheld, and instant snatch'd their spears,  
 " Many 'gainst two contesting ; but my lord  
 " And Pylades with dauntless courage stood  
 " Oppos'd, and shook their spears : Orestes then  
 " Thus spoke, ' I come not to this state a foe,  
 " ' Nor to my servants ; but my father's death  
 " ' I on his murd'rer have aveng'd ; you see  
 " ' Th' unfortunate Orestes : kill me not,  
 " ' My father's old attendants.' At those words  
 " They all restrain'd their spears ; and he was known  
 " By one grown hoary in the royal house.  
 " Crowns on thy brother's head they instant plac'd,  
 " With shouts of joy. He comes, and with him brings,  
 " Proof of his daring, not a Gorgon's head,\*  
 " But whom thou hatest, Ægisthus : blood for blood,  
 " Bitter requital, on the dead is fall'n.

*(Here enter Orestes and Pylades.)*

" ELECTRA.

" O glorious victor, from a father sprung  
 " Victorious in th' embattled fields of Troy,  
 " Orestes, for thy brows receive this crown.  
 From the vain contest of the length'ned course  
 " Thou comest not, but victorious o'er thy foe,  
 " Ægisthus slain, by whom thy father bled,  
 " And I have been undone. Thou too, brave youth,  
 " Train'd by a man most pious, in his toils  
 " Faithfull associate, Pylades, receive  
 " From me this wreath ; thine an equal share  
 " Of danger ; ever let me hold you blest.

---

\* Not a frightful spirit to alarm thee, but the body of thine enemy.



## "ORESTES.

"First, of this glorious fortune deem the gods,  
 "Electra, sov'reign rulers; then to me,  
 "The minister of fortune and the gods,  
 "Give the due praise. I come not to relate  
 "That I have slain Ægisthus: deeds shall speak  
 "For me; a proof to all, his lifeless corse  
 "I bring thee: treat it as thy soul inclines:  
 "Cast it by rav'nous beasts to be devour'd,  
 "Or to the birds, the children of the air,  
 "Fix it, impaled, a prey: the tyrant now,  
 "Ægisthus, is thy slave,\* once call'd thy lord."

Here the body of Ægisthus is brought in and placed at Electra's feet. Electra, now surveying the features of the corse, addresses it thus,—

"I never with the opening morn forbore  
 "To breathe my silent plaints, which to thy face  
 "I wish'd to utter, from my former fears  
 "If e'er I should be free: I now am free.  
 "Now, to thee living what I wish'd to speak,  
 "I will recount.† Thou hast destroy'd my hopes,  
 "Made me an orphan, him‡ and me bereft  
 "Of a dear father, by no wrong enforc'd.  
 "My mother basely wedding, thou hast slain  
 "The glorious leader§ of the Grecian arms,  
 "Yet never didst thou tread the fields of Troy.  
 "Nay, such thy folly, thou cou'dst hope to find  
 "My mother, shou'dst thou wed her, nought of ill  
 "To thee intending: hence my father's bed  
 "By thee was foully wrong'd. But let him know,  
 "Who with forbidden love another's wife  
 "Corrupts, then by necessity constrain'd  
 "Receives her as his own, should he expect

---

\* Ægisthus is now thy prey.

† Whilst you were living I could not (through the power you held over me) express my reproaches, but now I can speak freely.

‡ Orestes.

§ Agamemnon.

"To find that chastity preserv'd to him,  
 "Which to her former bed was not preserv'd,  
 "He must be wretched from his frustrate hope.  
 "And what a life of misery didst thou lead,  
 "Though not by thee deem'd ill? Thy conscious mind  
 "Of thy unholy nuptials felt the guilt:  
 "My mother knew that she an impious man  
 "In thee had wedded; and, polluted both,  
 "Thou hadst her fortune, she thy wickedness.  
 "'Mongst all the Argives this had fame\* divulg'd,  
 "The man obeys the wife, and not the wife  
 "Her husband: shamefull this, when in the house  
 "The woman sovereign rules, and not the man.  
 "And when of children speaks the public voice  
 "As from the mother, not the father† sprung,  
 "To me it is unpleasing. He, who weds  
 "A wife of higher rank and nobler blood,  
 "Sinks into nothing, in her splendor lost.  
 "This truth unknown,‡ thy pride was most deceiv'd,  
 "Thy self as great thou vauntedst, in the pow'r  
 "Of riches vainly elevate: but these  
 "Are nothing, their enjoyment frail and brief:  
 "Nature is firm, not riches; she remains  
 "For ever, and triumphant lifts her head.  
 "But unjust wealth, which sojourns with the base,  
 "Glitters for some short space, then flies away.  
 "To women thy demeanour I shall pass  
 "Unmention'd, for to speak it ill beseems  
 "A virgin's tongue; yet I shall make it known  
 "By indistinct suggestion:§ Arrogance  
 "Swell'd thy vain mind, for that the royal house  
 "Was thine, and beauty grac'd thy perfect form.

\* Rumour.

† The reason in ancient times that women were kept in such subjection was, that the idea existed that the man was the progenitor of his species, whilst the woman was merely an instrument to mature his offspring.

‡ You, Ægisthus, were blind to this fact.

§ Of your adulterate intercourse with my mother I will not speak, because it is indelicate to do so before women, but the hint I give will be understood by them.

"But be not mine an husband, whose fair face  
 "In softness with a virgin's vies, but one  
 "Of manly manners; for the sons of such  
 "By martial toils are train'd to glorious deeds;  
 "The beauteous only to the dance give grace.  
 "Perish, thou wretch to nothing noble form'd:  
 "Such wast thou found, and vengeance on thy head  
 "At length hath burst: so perish all, that dare  
 "Atrocious deeds! Nor deem, though fair his course  
 "At first, that he hath vanquish'd justice, e'er  
 "He shall have reach'd the goal, the end of life."

Is there not an excellent proverb and moral precept contained in this speech worthy of the most profound consideration, for whilst we can read such, and learn from authors of this class, is it not a deplorable fact that many thousands of people will waste their time upon the fulsome nonsense which is written now-a-days, and which they seem to enjoy because (I suppose) it is vivacious and evanescent?

Clytemnestra is now seen advancing to attend (as she thinks) on Electra, whom she has been told has given birth to a male child, Electra having sent her a message to that effect. We are left entirely to conjecture by what impulse Clytemnestra was influenced in obeying the summons; it can scarcely be imagined that it could be out of affection for her daughter, whom she had so shamefully debased, yet they say that (and I believe it is true) at such a period the most stone-hearted and stubborn-souled women are sometimes touched with pity, particularly those who have themselves borne children. Seeing Clytemnestra approaching in her car of state, Electra remains firm in her resolve, but Orestes wavers and says,—

"She bore me, bred me: Her how shall I slay?"

## "ELECTRA.

"As she thy noble father slew and mine."

I may here be allowed to pause to remark that the scene which here takes place both before and after Clytemnestra is slain, resembles so much that in Macbeth before and after the murder of King Duncan, that I have no doubt but Skakespeare had this in his mind when he was writing the scene I allude to. I will revert to this by and bye, when I have finished treating upon Electra, as it would otherwise interfere with the present thread of my argument. Electra satisfies her brother of the justice of their enterprise in killing their mother, as Clytemnestra assassinated her husband, Agamemnon, their father. She argues that it is but a just retribution, and that it is as much their duty to avenge their father's death as it is to obey the gods. Hereupon Orestes retires into the cottage, and Clytemnestra enters, attended by her suite; the Chorus welcome her, and after the Queen and Electra have conversed, the one charging crime upon the other, whilst Clytemnestra attempts to justify herself, saying that Agamemnon wrought her to the deed through his offering her daughter Iphigenia a sacrifice, and by bringing Cassandra into their house, depriving her of part of her rights as his lawful wife. She now consents to offer up sacrifice for Electra's (supposed) new-born son, and for this purpose she enters Electra's cottage, who follows her mother in. The Chorus now sing, after which the Queen is heard within, appealing to her son and daughter to have mercy upon her, but they slay her, and then re-appear upon the stage, Orestes with

the bloody sword in his hand, who, now horrified, reflects upon what he has done, and says,—

“O Earth, and thou all-seeing Jove, behold  
“These bloody, these detested deeds! In death  
“Stretch’d on the ground beneath my hand they lie,  
“Both lie, a sad atonement for my wrongs.”

Orestes, pointing to the bloody sword, says,—

“These bloody, these detested deeds!”

Macbeth, who appears on the stage in precisely the same position, only that he has two daggers in his hands instead of a sword, showing them to Lady Macbeth, says,—

“This is a sorry sight.”

Orestes speaks of his mother imploring for pity, whilst with her hand she was patting his cheek. Macbeth says,—

“We will proceed no further in this business :  
“He hath honour’d me of late.”

Electra, soothing Orestes, says,—

“I to my mother came, I boldly came  
“To her that gave me birth.”

Lady Macbeth says,—

“Had he not resembled  
“My father as he slept, I had done ’t.”

Orestes says,—

“Wretched Electra, how cou’dst thou sustain  
“A sight like this?”

In another scene Macbeth says to Lady Macbeth,—

“When now I think you can behold such sights,  
“And keep the natural ruby of your cheeks.”

Lady Macbeth says, showing her hands all over blood after she has been in the chamber of death,—

“My hands are of your colour ; but I shame  
“To wear a heart so white.”

Electra says (when Orestes laments having plunged the sword into his mother’s breast),—

“I urg’d thee to it ; I too touch’d the sword.”

When Electra is urging Orestes to do the deed. she says (referring to his shrinking) :—

“On seeing her hath pity seiz’d thy heart ?”

Lady Macbeth (when she is urging Macbeth to do the deed, and he is faltering) says :—

“Was the hope drunk,  
“Wherin you dress’d yourself ? hath it slept since ?”

Orestes refers to his mother’s having borne him as a reason why he should not become her assassin, whilst Macbeth argues that he ought not to assassinate the King as

“He hath honour’d me of late.”

Electra argues that vengeance for their father’s death is no crime, whilst Lady Macbeth tries to quiet her husband’s fears, saying,—

“A foolish thought, to say a sorry sight.”

Orestes starts affrighted, and says,—

“Like to the god perchance some demon spoke.

“ELECTRA.

“What, from the sacred tripod ! Vain surmise.”



“MACBETH.

“How say’st thou, that Macduff denies his person,  
“At our great bidding?

“LADY MACBETH.

“Did you send to him, sir?

“MACBETH.

“I hear it by the way.”

I am aware that the language used in these two plays differs, but there is a strong similarity, and the situations are so similar that they induce me to believe that Shakspeare was thinking of this scene whilst he was writing that which I have before alluded to, let us for argument sake imagine that Orestes and Electra are people in the prime of life, as Macbeth and his wife are, and let us see them upon the stage similarly attired, would not the acting be essentially similar. Now Castor and Pollux appear (as two gods), and addressing Orestes and Electra, tell them that he must leave the country to do penance (the belief of these people being that absenting themselves from their own land for a year absolved them of the crime of murder), and that Electra must wed Pylades, who is to take her with him from her country for the like object. They are thus consoled that what they have done was by the decree of fate, and so the play ends.

Respecting the Tragedy of Orestes (speaking of Euripides), Longinus has said that the poet’s description of Orestes’ madness has shown himself, “Like the lion that at first disregards his assailants, but as soon as he feels the spear, lashes himself up to rage, and rushes on with impetuous ardour: If his genius did not of itself carry him to the sublime, he has here forced

his nature to the true tragic elevation :” and Potter has remarked that “The poet himself saw the furies ; and what his imagination so finely conceived he forced his audience almost to see.” This excellent scholar has also made several other pertinent remarks relative to this tragedy which I am now about descanting upon ; it is my intention to point them out to you hereafter, as I come to the parts to which they pertain. I prefer this course, as I think it is the better plan than disjointing the references. We left Orestes in the last tragedy exclaiming bitterly against Phœbus for making him the minister of vengeance on Clytemnestra, for murdering her husband Agamemnon, and Electra was left trying to console her brother that all the crime could not rest upon his head, as she assisted him in its completion. The gods Castor and Pollux were also present exonerating them from blame in the matter, as they were merely the instruments of fate. With justice the gods say vengeance has fallen on Clytemnestra, as hers was an unholy deed. They think it was an unwise proceeding on the part of Phœbus, but as he is esteemed a wise god and their king, they will not question his actions (it must be here understood that Castor and Pollux are represented as planets, and Phœbus as the sun). It behoves us, they say, to remain silent, and even to praise what he has decreed, therefore, as Electra must be affianced to Pylades, she will find protection under his care ; but you, Orestes, must leave Argos and go to Athens, where you will put yourself under the care of the goddess Minerva. Near to the city of Athens is the Mount of Mars, on which the gods sat in judgment on Halirrhottus. This allusion is made to the circumstance of Mars murdering Halirrhottus, and ought

more correctly be said that the gods there sat in judgment on Mars, the fable being that Halirrhottus, the son of Neptune, having violated Alcippe, the daughter of Mars, the latter assassinated him, when Neptune cited Mars before the gods who tried him, and acquitted him of the crime. The decision was come to by each of the gods depositing a shell on either side of the mount, when they were counted they were found to be equal in number, and so Mars was acquitted. Castor and Pollux tell Orestes that in like manner he must make appeal to the gods on the same mount, when the decision will be in his favour, as Apollo will intercede for him, and take the blame upon himself. The ancients tell us that it was from the circumstance of this trial of Mars that the institution in the laws of mankind was established, that when the votes of judges are equal in number, the prisoner shall have the benefit of no decision being come to. This is tantamount in our days to a prisoner having the benefit of the doubt, and when juries cannot come to a decision, they are discharged without giving a verdict. I believe by a recent enactment according to our law in the crime of murder, should this occur the prisoner can be retried before another jury, and suitors in civil actions can commence *de novo*. This circumstance also gave rise to the ancient law that if a man committed a murder and could succeed in leaving his country before the authorities had him in custody, and remain in a strange land for one year, he could return absolved of the crime. It is also probable that the institution of absolution in certain religions originated through this same fable. Castor and Pollux further tell Orestes that when he leaves Mount Mars he must go to the Lycæan Temple, which is situate near to the banks

of the Alpheus, here he must establish a city in Arcadia, which is to be called after him. We do not find it clearly established if ever Orestes did settle in Arcadia or not, opinions upon this head differ, but a statement is extant that Orestes died in Arcadia from the bite of a serpent. I should here mention that I have much more to relate to you respecting Orestes, but this I must defer until I come to the next tragedy, which will be "Iphigenia in Tauris." Castor and Pollux still continue their charge to Orestes, saying that he must leave the funeral rites of his mother to be arranged by Menelaus, and that the body of Ægisthus shall be buried at Athens. I have purposely reserved what I have been relating to you from the tragedy of Electra, and brought it in to this of Orestes, to show you how admirably our poet (Euripides) has carried on the thread of the argument. The following characters are now represented: Orestes, Electra, Helena, Menelaus, Tyndarus (father of Clytemnestra and Helena), Pylades, a messenger, a slave, and the chorus (which is composed of Argive maidens). The scene is laid at Argos, in the royal palace. By the bye, ere I proceed any further, I think I ought to tell you who this staunch friend Pylades was. His father was King of Phocis, his mother was aunt to Orestes, as Agamemnon was her brother. One statement is that when Clytemnestra assassinated Agamemnon, she was also about plunging a dagger into Orestes, who was then a child, Electra (then a grown girl) snatched the child from her mother's fury, passed him into the hands of their faithful servant Tutor, who conveyed him at once to Phocis, where the king Strophius took charge of him, and educated him with his own son Pylades. From this circumstance their attachment grew for each

other, and lasted throughout life. I will revert to this subject again by and bye. I now inform you that the play of Orestes opens by Electra's describing the whole of the circumstances concerning it, which I will read to you, not that it is necessary I should do so for the sake of developing the plot of the play, for that I have already done, but because in her speech she alludes to several circumstances concerning the mythology which I desire to make you acquainted with.

" ELECTRA.

" There is not in the stores of angry heav'n

" Aught terrible, affliction or distress,

" But miserable man bears its full weight.

" E'en Tantalus,\* the son of Jove,† the blest,

\* I find a note in Potter's work to this name, which has evidently been copied from Holwell, or they must both have received their opinions from another source, and copied from that nearly alike. The gist of the note is, that a misconception has taken place regarding the word *Petros*, which has been misinterpreted, *stone*, here meaning the sun, for the Amonian notions were that the sun was an ignited stone. The constant fear of Tantalus is described as a nervousness lest that this stone should fall upon him and crush him, for he had been expelled from the order of priesthood because he had made known to some of the uninitiated the secrets of the mysteries of *Osiris*. *Osiris* was a name the sun was worshipped under in Egypt, and was called *Petor* or *Petora*. Both these words are from *Petros*. The Phœnicians had, in one of their temples, a large round black stone, which they thought dropped from heaven; this they worshipped as an emblem of *Osiris*, the sun. The name of *Osiris* originated (according to Plutarch) from *Os*, which means much, and *Iris*, an eye; these were applied to the sun in a compound word, *Osiris*, the great eye, or the eye of heaven.

† The reason Tantalus is called the son of Jove is as follows: Zeus (which is the same as Jove) in an amour with a nymph named Pluto begat Tantalus (this name was originally spelt Tantalos), Tantalus begat Pelops, who was the father of Atreus and Thyestes. Atreus married Aërope, and had two sons, Agamemnon and Menelaus. Aërope committed herself with her brother-in-law, Thyestes, and had by him two children. These were murdered by Atreus, and served up



"(Not to malign his fate,) hangs in the air,  
 "And trembles at the rock, which o'er his head  
 "Projects its threat'ning mass ; a punishment  
 "They say, for that to heav'n's high feasts admitted,  
 "A mortal equal with th' immortals grac'd,  
 "He curb'd not the intemperance of his tongue :  
 "The sire of Pelops he, of Atreus this,  
 "For whom the fates weaving a diadem  
 "Wove Discord with the thread, to kindle war  
 "Betwixt the brothers, Atreus and Thyestes.  
 "But why recite things horrible to tell ?  
 "Him Atreus feasted, having slain his sons.  
 "From Atreus (may oblivion hide the rest)  
 "Th' illustrious Agamemnon, if illustrious,\*  
 "And Menelaus had birth ; Aërope  
 "Of Crete their mother. Menelaus espous'd  
 "The fatal Helen, by the gods abhorr'd.  
 "Th' imperial Agamemnon woo'd the bed  
 "Of Clytemnestra, memorable to Greece :  
 "From her three daughters sprung, Chrysothemis,†  
 "And Iphigenia, and myself Electra,  
 "One son, Orestes, from this wicked mother,

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as food to their father, Thyestes, who was invited to a feast for this purpose by his brother, and told by him, when it was over, what he had done. Thus, you see, Thyestes ate part of his own offspring, which he had had by intercourse with his brother's wife. We have also a statement that Agamemnon and Menelaus were sons of Pleisthenes (or Plisthenes), who was the son of Atreus, then again it is said that Plisthenes married Aërope, and died soon after that, then his father Atreus married his daughter-in-law, and the children were born to him. These were called the Atreidæ, which means the descendants of Atreus.

\* "If illustrious," here the doubt is inferred by Euripides, illustrious if the sons of Pleisthenes and Aërope (being a natural intercourse) but not illustrious if by her and Atreus, for such a marriage was unnatural. The previous passage, "May oblivion hide the rest," alludes to the serving up of the human flesh.

† I have, in a previous lecture, mentioned to you that I thought there was a third daughter, this (Chrysothemis) is her I alluded to, although I could not then remember the name, besides which, there are two statements extant. Euripides makes her a third daughter, whilst Homer alludes to her as the same as Iphigenia.



" Who in th' inextricable robe entangled\*  
 " Her husband murder'd, for a cause which ill  
 " Becomes a virgin's modest lips t'unfold.†  
 " Th' injustice‡ of Apollo must I blame ?  
 " Orestes he commands to slay his mother,  
 " Nor bears to all the glory of the deed.  
 " Not disobedient to the god he slew her.  
 " I had my share, such as a woman might,  
 " And Pylades assisted in the act.  
 " Since then the poor Orestes pines away  
 " Impair'd with cruel sickness ; on his bed  
 " He lies ; his mother's blood to phrenzy whirls  
 " His tortur'd sense : th' avenging pow'rs,§ that haunt  
 " His soul with terrors thus, I dare not name.||  
 " The sixth day this, since on the hallow'd pile  
 " My slaughter'd mother purg'd her strains away.  
 " No food hath pass'd his lips, no bath refresh'd  
 " His limbs ; but in his garments cover'd close,  
 " When his severe disease abates a little,  
 " He melts in tears ; and sometimes from his couch  
 " Starts furious, like a colt burst from his yoke.  
 " Mean time the state of Argos hath decreed  
 " That shelt'ring roof, and fire, and conference  
 " Be interdicted to us matricides.  
 " And this decisive day the states pronounce  
 " Our doom, to die crush'd with o'erwhelming stones,  
 " Or by th' avenging sword plung'd in our breasts.  
 " Yet have we one small ray of brightning hope,  
 " Hope that we die not ; for from Troy return'd  
 " After long wand'rings Menelaus arrives,  
 " His vessels in the Nauplian harbour moor'd,

\* This has been called the "net of Hades," which means the dark net in which Agamemnon was caught, or rather, the garment in which he was entangled. Clytemnestra threw this over him as he came out of the bath, so to embarrass him, and then murder him.

† The "cause" she alludes to was her mother's unnatural passion for her husband's cousin, Ægisthus.

‡ The injustice of Apollo in making her and her brother the instruments of fate.

§ The Eunuimides.

|| A superstition existed that it was sinful to name them.

"And to this strand impels his eager ear :  
 "But the woe-working Helen in the shades  
 "Of shelt'ring night, lest some, whose sons were slain  
 "Beneath the walls of Troy, seeing her walk  
 "In day's fair light, with vengefull rage might rise,  
 "And crush the shining\* mischief, first he lands,  
 "And sends her to our house :† there now she is,  
 "Weeping her sister's fate, and our afflictions.  
 "Yet midst her grief this comfort she enjoys,  
 "Hermione, her virgin daughter, whom  
 "At Sparta, when she sail'd for Troy, she left,†  
 "The father to my mother's care consign'd,  
 "In her delighted she forgets her woes.  
 "But my quick eye glances to each access,  
 "If Menelaus advancing I might see.  
 "Weak help from others, if not sav'd by him :  
 "The house of the unhappy hath no friend."

Helen now enters, and after conversing with Electra upon the topics of their woes, they depart, and the scene changes to the interior of the palace, where Orestes is seen reclining upon a couch, Electra and the Chorus attendant upon him.

The Chorus now sing, and (after being admonished by Electra to go farther from the couch on which Orestes is lying lest they awaken him) they retire to the other side of the stage and sing as follows :—

\* The handsome.

† On Menelaus' arrival with Helen, and having disembarked from their vessel, he bore her through the city in the night, lest the people should intercept them and destroy Helen, as being the cause of so many troubles to the state, for although Euripides makes Menelaus aware of his wife's innocence, it is not so made apparent to the people of Argos.

† According to this, Hermione was left behind by Helen when she eloped with Paris, and Menelaus placed her in the care of his sister-in-law, Clytemnestra ; this disproves the oft told tale about Helen's having had this child by Theseus.

"Awfull queen, whose gentle pow'r  
 "Brings sweet oblivion of our woes,  
 "And in the calm and silent hour  
 "Distills the blessings of repose,  
 "Come awfull Night,  
 "Come from the gloom of Erebus profound,  
 "And spread thy sable-tinctur'd wings around ;  
 "Speed to this royal house thy flight :  
 "For pale-eyed Grief, and wild Affright  
 "And all the horrors of Despair,  
 "Here pour their rage, and threaten ruin here.

"ELECTRA. •

"Softly let your warblings flow ;  
 "Further, a further distance keep :  
 "The far oft cadence sweet and low  
 "Charms his repose, and aids his sleep.

"CHORUS.

"Tell us, what end  
 "Awaits his mis'ries ?

"ELECTRA.

"Death : that end I fear.  
 "He tastes no food.  
 "When Phoebus gave the dire command  
 "To bathe in mother's blood his hand,  
 "By whom the father sunk in dust,  
 "He doom'd us victims.  
 "She slew, she died.—Thy hand abhor'd  
 "In dust my bleeding father laid :  
 "And for thy blood, in vengeance pour'd,  
 "We perish, perish as the dead.  
 "The shadowy train  
 "Thou joinest, but my life shall waste away  
 "In tears the night, in sighs and groans the day.  
 "But, ah ! to whom shall I complain ?  
 "Nor child nor husband sooths my pain :  
 "For ever drag I my distress,  
 "Sigh, mourn, and weep in lonely wretchedness.

“ CHORUS.

“ Go nearer, royal virgin ; nearer view him,  
“ That under this soft sleep the sleep of death  
“ Deceive thee not : I like not this still rest.”

Orestes awakes, and all the horrors of an afflicted conscience are pourtrayed, mingled with affectionate solicitude for an equally affectionate sister.

“ ORESTES.

“ O gentle Sleep, whose lenient pow’r thus sooths  
“ Disease and pain, how sweet thy visit to me,  
“ Who wanted thy soft aid ! Blessing divine,  
“ That to the wretched givest wish’d repose,  
“ Steeping their senses in forgetfulness !—  
“ Where have I been ? Where am I ? How brought hither ?  
“ My late distraction blots remembrance out.

“ ELECTRA.

“ My most dear brother, Oh what heart-felt joy  
“ To see thee lie composed in gentle sleep !  
“ Wilt thou I touch thee ? Shall I raise thee up ?

“ ORESTES.

“ Assist me then, assist me ; from my mouth  
“ Wipe off this clotted foam ; wipe my moist eyes.

“ ELECTRA.

“ Delightfull office, for a sister’s hand  
“ To minister relief to a sick brother.

“ ORESTES.

“ Lie by my side, and from my face remove  
“ These squalid locks ; they blind my darken’d eyes.

“ ELECTRA.

“ How tangled are the ringlets of thy hair,  
“ Wild and disorder’d through this long neglect !

" ORESTES.

" Pray lay me down again : when this ill frenzy  
" Leaves me, I am very feeble, very faint.

" ELECTRA.

" There, there : the bed is gratefull to the sick,  
" A mournfull, but a necessary tenure.

" ORESTES.

" Raise me again ; more upright ; bend me forward.

" CHORUS.

" The sick are wayward through their restlessness.

" ELECTRA.

" Or wilt thou try with slow steps on the ground  
" To fix thy feet ? Variety is sweet.

" ORESTES.

" Most willingly : it hath the show of health ;  
    *(Rises and comes forward supported by Electra.)*

" ELECTRA.

" Now, my lov'd brother, hear me, whilst the Furies  
" Permit thy sense thus clear and undisturb'd.

" ORESTES.

" Hast thou aught new ? If good, I thank thee for it ;  
" If ill, I have enough of ill already.

" ELECTRA.

" Thy father's brother, Menelaus, arrives ;  
" His fleet lies anchor'd in the Nauplian bay.

" ORESTES.

" Comes he then ? Light on our afflictions dawns :  
" Much to my father's kindness doth he owe.

"ELECTRA.

"He comes ; and, to confirm what now I say,  
"Brings Helena from Ilium's ruin'd walls.

"ORESTES.

"More to be envied,\* were he sav'd alone :  
"Bringing his wife, he brings a mighty ill.

"ELECTRA.

"The female line of Tyndarus was born  
"To deep disgrace, and infamous through Greece.

"ORESTES.

"Be thou unlike them then : 'tis in thy pow'r :  
"And further than in words thy virtue prove.

"ELECTRA.

"Alas, my brother, wildly rolls thine eye :  
"So quickly chang'd ! the frantic fit returns.

"ORESTES.

"Ah, mother ! Do not set thy Furies on me.  
"See, how their fiery eye-balls glare† in blood,  
"And wreathing snakes hiss in their horrid hair !  
"There, there they stand, ready to leap upon me.

"ELECTRA.

"Rest thee, poor brother, rest thee on thy bed :  
"Thou see'st them not : 'tis fancy's coinage all.

"ORESTES.

"O Phoebus, they will kill me, these dire forms,  
"These gorgon-visag'd ministers of hell !

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\* More to be regretted.

† This remark has frequently been made by authors when they have described a maniac—almost every poet describes his eye-balls glaring with fire ; I suppose they resort to the expression because it is something horrid to look upon. Surely all lunatics have not blood-shotted eyes.



"ELECTRA.

"Thus will I hold thee, round thee throw mine arms,  
"And check th' unhappy force of thy wild starts.

"ORESTES.

"Off, let me go : I know thee, who thou art,  
"One of the Furies ; and thou grapplest with me,  
"To whirl me into Tartarus. Avaunt !

"ELECTRA.

*(Shrinks down and hides her face in fear).*

"What shall I do ? Ah me, where shall I seek  
"Assistance since th' unfriendly god frowns on us.

"ORESTES.

"Bring me the bow of horn which Phœbus gave me,  
"And with it bade me drive these fiends away,  
"Should they affright me with their mad'ning terrors.

"ELECTRA.

"Shall any god by mortal hands be wounded ?

"ORESTES.

"Should she not instant vanish from my sight.  
"Heard you the clang ? Saw you the winged shaft  
"Bound from the distant-wounding bow ? Ha, ha,  
"Here yet ! On swift wings mount th' æthereal air,  
"And there impeach the oracle of Phœbus.—  
"Whence this disquiet ? Why thus pants my breath ?  
"Ah, whither am I wander'd from my bed ?  
"For from the storm the high-swoln waves subside.  
"Why dost thou weep my sister ? Why decline  
"Thy drooping head, and hide it in thy vest ?\*  
"I blush to give thee part in my disease,  
"And wound with grief thy virgin tenderness.  
"Let not my ills be thus infectious to thee :  
"Thou barely didst assent ; I did the deed,

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\* By this it would seem that Electra covers her face, fearing to look upon the affliction her brother is suffering.

"I shed her blood. But Phœbus I must blame,  
 "Who urg'd me to this most unholy act ;  
 "Then, save with soothing words, assists me not.  
 "Had these eyes seen my father, had I ask'd him  
 "In duty if I ought to slay my mother  
 "I think he would have pray'd me not to plunge  
 "My murdering sword in her that gave me birth ;  
 "Since he could not revisit heav'n's sweet light,  
 "And I must suffer all these miseries.  
 "But now unveil thy face, and dry thy tears,  
 "My sister, though afflictions press us sore :  
 "And when though seest me in these fitfull moods,  
 "Sooth my disorder'd sense, and let thy voice  
 "Speak peace to my distraction : when the sigh  
 "Swells in thy bosom, 'tis a brother's part  
 "With tender sympathy to calm thy griefs :  
 "These are the pleasing offices of friends.  
 "But to thy chamber go, afflicted maid,  
 "There seek repose, close thy long-sleepless eyes,  
 "With food refresh thee, and th' enlivening bath.  
 "Shou'dst thou forsake me, or with too close tendance  
 "Impair thy delicate and tender health,  
 "Then were I lost indeed ; for thou alone,  
 "Abandon'd as I am, art all my comfort.

"ELECTRA.

"Should I forsake thee ! No : my choice is fix'd ;  
 "And I will die with thee, or with thee live,  
 "Indifferent for my self, for shou'dst thou die,  
 "What refuge shall a lonely virgin find,  
 "Her brother lost, her father lost, her friends  
 "All melted from her ?—Yet if such thy wish,  
 "I ought t'obey : recline thee on thy couch,  
 "Nor let these visionary terrors fright thee :  
 "There rest : though all be fancy's coinage wild,  
 "Yet nature sinks beneath the violent toil."

Here (after Electra leaves the stage) the Chorus sing, then Menelaus enters, and asks to see Orestes, who replies. But this part of my narrative I must defer until next we meet, as it is time now to break off and finish this Lecture.

## LECTURE XXII.

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I left off my last lecture where Menelaus entered and asked to see Orestes.

“ORESTES.

“He, whom thou seek'st am I : I am Orestes.

“To thee, O king, will I unfold my woes,

“And willingly : but first I grasp thy knees,

“And pour my plain unornamented pray'r :

“Save me ; for thou 'midst my distress art come.

“MENELAUS.

“Ye pow'rs of heav'n, what do mine eyes behold,

“One from the regions of the dead return'd !

“ORESTES.

“Well hast thou said : I view the light indeed,

“But do not live ; such are my miseries.

“MENELAUS.

“How wild, how horrid hangs thy matted hair !

“Thy shrunk and hollow eye glares dreadfully.

“Reason revolts at this thy squalid form.

“ORESTES.

“Alas, I am the murderer of my mother.

“MENELAUS.

“I have heard it : spare mine ear the tale of woe.

“What are thy suff'rings ? What disease consumes thee ?

"ORESTES.

"Conscience : the conscious guilt of horrid deeds  
"A pining melancholy most consumes me.  
"And frenzy, fierce t' avenge my mother's blood.  
"By night, as from rude hands I guard her bones.  
"Three virgin forms I see gloomy as night.  
"Awfull they are : forbear irreverent words.  
"Ah wretched me, how dreadfull their pursuit !  
"Yet have we where to charge our miseries.  
"Phœbus ; by whose command I slew my mother.  
"We to the gods submit, whate'er they are.

"MENELAUS.

"And doth not Phœbus in thine ills protect thee ?

"ORESTES.

"Not yet : delays attend the pow'rs divine.

"MENELAUS.

"In what light both the city view thy deeds ?

"ORESTES.

"They hate us, so that none hold conference with us.

"MENELAUS.

"Hast thou yet purified thy hands from blood ?

"ORESTES.

"Where'er I go, each house is barr'd against me.

"MENELAUS.

"What citizens thus drive thee from the land ?

"ORESTES.

"Oeax,\* through ranc'rous malice to my father.

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\* Oeax was a brother of Palamedes, who was put to death by the Grecian princes before Troy, for that they suspected him of an intention to betray them to King Priam ; he was a son of Nauplius, King of

"MENELAUS.

"On thee avenging Palamedes' death.

"ORESTES.

"I wrought it not. But three\* pursue my ruin.

"They hurt me most, whose pow'r now sways the state.

"They, who no longer suffer us to live !

"Sentence against us will this day be giv'n.

"To die, with stones crush'd by our citizens.

"MENELAUS.

"Why flyest thou not far from this country's bounds ?

"ORESTES.

"On every side we are enclos'd with arms.

"By the whole state : in brief, that I may die.

"MENELAUS.

"Wretch, thou hast reach'd misfortune's dire extreme.

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Eubœa, his mother's name was Clymene ; his death was occasioned by one of Ulysses's wily tricks. Palamedes discovered to the Greeks that Ulysses was feigning madness to avoid going to the war, in consequence of which, the King of Ithaca (Ulysses) was compelled to join in the expedition ; this raised his ire, and he bribed one of Palamedes' servants to dig a hole in his master's tent, and there deposit a sum of money which Ulysses gave him for that purpose ; Ulysses then forged a letter purporting it as having been signed by Priam, in this letter was written certain overtures to Palamedes to betray his trust, the letter was then put into the hands of a messenger, surreptitiously to be conveyed to Palamedes' tent ; the messenger was intercepted and the letter taken from him, which was then forwarded to the chief of the expedition, and occasioned Palamedes to be arrested. Ulysses upon this so managed matters, that the gold (which he had caused to be deposited in Palamedes' tent) was discovered ; this was looked upon as a confirmation of Palamedes' guilt, and, in consequence, he was stoned to death ; through this, his brother Cæx, to avenge him, sowed dissension amongst the Greeks on their return to Argos, which is what Orestes here alludes to.

\* The Eumenides were three in number ; these were the three alluded to by Orestes as pursuing his ruin.

"ORESTES.

"In thee is all my hope, in thee my refuge :  
 "Happy to us afflicted art thou come ;  
 "Share with thy friends that happiness, alone  
 "Enjoy not all the good thou hast receiv'd ;  
 "In our afflictions bear a friendly part.  
 "Think how my father lov'd thee, and requite  
 "That love to us ; it will become thee well :  
 "They have the name of friends, but not the worth,  
 "Who are not our friends in our calamities."

Here Tyndarus enters, to whom both Menelaus and Orestes appeal for his interest to save Orestes and Electra from death, but Tyndarus declines, pleading it his is duty to the state not to save a wretch who has killed his mother, upon which Orestes disdains further conversation with the old man, who replies,—

"What, dost thou brave me, and in proud defiance  
 "So answer, as to pierce my heart with grief ?  
 "This pride will fire me more to urge thy death.  
 "One honest task I'll add to that which drew me  
 "Hither, to grace my murder'd daughter's tomb,  
 "This instant to th' assembled Argives go,\*  
 "And rouse the willing state, an easy task,†  
 "To crush thee, and thy sister : she deserves,  
 "E'en more than thou, to die, whose accurs'd tongue  
 "Added new fierceness to thy fierce intents,  
 "Thine ears assailing with some bitter speech,  
 "That Agamemnon's shade haunted her dreams,  
 "That the tremendous pow'rs below abhorr'd  
 "Th' adulterous bed, foul e'en to man's gross sense,  
 "Till all this house blaz'd in the flames she kindled.  
 "I tell thee, Menelaus, and I will do it,  
 "If thou regard my hate, or my alliance,

---

\* I will this instant to the assembled Argives go.

† The people being in an excited state from the circumstances of the murders of Clytemnestra and Ægisthus, also through having heard of Helen's return to Argos.



"Protect him not, by the just gods I charge thee,  
 "But leave him to the rigour of the laws,  
 "Or never dare to tread on Spartan ground.\*  
 "Hear me, and mark me ; league not with the vile,  
 "Nor scorn thy friends, whose breasts with virtue glow.  
 "Heret† my attendants, lead me from this house.

[*Exit TYNDARUS.*]

"ORESTES.

"Why‡ get thee gone, that I may plead to him,  
 "Uninterrupted by thy wayward age.—  
 "Why dost thou bend that way, then backward turn  
 "Thoughfull thy step, asorb'd in anxious care ?

"MENELAUS.

"Forbear, and leave me to my thoughts, perplex'd  
 "And unresolv'd which cause I should espouse.

"ORESTES.

"Suspend awhile thy judgment ; hear me first,  
 "First hear my plea ; weigh it, and then resolve.

"MENELAUS.

"Speak ; thou hast reason :§ wisdom sometimes loves  
 "To dwell with silence, sometimes wooes the ear.

"ORESTES.

"Then let me urge my plea : and, Oh ! forgive me  
 "If I seem tedious : grief is fond of words.  
 "Give me not aught of thine ; only return  
 "What from my father's grace thou hast receiv'd.

\* Tyndarus's meaning here is that if Orestes wishes to save himself, let him fly immediately and never return into Sparta.

† It is very imperative that there should be here a punctuation ; but as it is not in Potter's text I'll leave it as I find it, being scrupulously particular (throughout the whole) not to alter any quotation I make.

‡ There ought also to be a punctuation here to make the sentence read correctly.

§ Great cause to speak.

"I ask not thy rich treasures, yet a treasure  
 "Richer than all thy stores ; I ask my life.  
 "Is this unjust ? Let me from thee receive  
 "Something unjust : \* such Agamemnon was,  
 "Who led to Troy th' united arms of Greece :  
 "Yet was the wrong not his ; but to avenge  
 "Thy wife's incontinent and foul offence.  
 "For all his dangers, all his toils in war,  
 "Borne as becomes a friend in a friend's cause,  
 "Give me one day for his ten years in arms.  
 "To vindicate thy honour, one short day  
 "Stand firm, my friend, the guardian of my life.  
 "For thee at Aulis my poor sister died ;  
 "I am content, nor ask Hermione  
 "A sacrifice for me : in my distress  
 "Protect me, pity me ; I ask no more.  
 "To my unhappy father† grant my life,  
 "And save my sister, save her virgin years.  
 "The house of Agamemnon sinks with me.  
 "Impossible, thou'lt say : When danger threatens,  
 "The friend comes forth resolv'd, and shields his friend :  
 "In fortune's golden smiles what need of friends ?  
 "Her fav'ring pow'r wants no auxiliary.  
 "Greece sees thou lov'st thy wife : I speak not this  
 "In flattery, to wind into thy bosom ;  
 "But I conjure thee by that love— Ah me !  
 "How am I fall'n ! Not for myself alone  
 "I pour my pray'r, but for my father's house.  
 "Now by the kindred blood, whose royal tide  
 "Rolls in thy veins ; by each endearing tie  
 "Of fond relation and fraternal love,  
 "Think that my murder'd father's injur'd shade  
 "Bursts from the realms of death, and hovers o'er thee ;  
 "And think, Oh think the words I speak are his.

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\* I ask you to intercede for me to save my life ; even if it be unjust to grant it, I am willing to receive such injustice. Life is sweet, and I would save my life even though it be unjustly granted. My father acted unjustly in entering as he did in an unjust cause to serve you. He gave you ten years' fighting—you give in return but one day's fighting for me, his son.

† For sake of my father's memory.

" 'Tis for my life I plead, Life's dear to all,  
 " With sighs, with groans, with tears : save me, Oh save me !

" MENELAUS.

" I hold thee dear, Orestes, and am willing  
 " To give my friendly aid in thy distress ;  
 " Th' affinity of blood calls loudly on us  
 " To share its toils, if the gods grant the pow'r,  
 " Nor shrink appall'd at danger or at death ;  
 " And much I wish the gods would grant this pow'r :  
 " But with a thousand toils oppress'd I come,  
 " And lift a single spear,\* whose glitt'ring point  
 " No squadrons follow wedg'd in firm array ;  
 " Few my remaining friends, and small my force.  
 " With Argos then should we engage in arms,  
 " We could not conquer ; but with gentle words  
 " Perchance we may : this way Hope smiles on us.  
 " Who would with feeble forces aim at deeds  
 " Of perilous proof ? 'Twere folly to attempt it.  
 " When rous'd to rage the madd'ning populace storms,  
 " Their fury, like a rolling flame bursts forth  
 " Unquenchable ; but give its violence way,  
 " It spends it self, and as its force abates,  
 " Learns to obey, and yields it to your will :  
 " Their passions varying thus, now rough with rage,  
 " Now melting with soft pity, Wisdom marks  
 " The change, and turns it to a rich account.  
 " Thus Tyndarus I will move, and th' Argive state  
 " To use their supreme pow'r with gentleness.  
 " The gallant bark, that too much swells her sails,  
 " Oft is o'erset, but let her pride be lower'd,  
 " She rides secure, and glories in the gale.  
 " Impetuous rage is hatefull to the gods,  
 " Hatefull to men : with cool unpassion'd reason  
 " (Discretion guides my words) I must preserve thee,  
 " And not, as thou perchance may'st deem, by force ;  
 " Against the stronger what can force avail ?  
 " Its trophies can my single spear erect

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\* This remark, on the part of Menelaus, proves that he had not the power or authority to command obedience to his will ; and it is strengthened by his following assertions.

"Victorious o'er the ills that now assaults thee?

"To be a suitor hath not been my use

"At Argos, but Necessity will teach us,

"If wise, submission to the pow'r of Fortune."

[*Exit.* MENELAUS.]

Menelaus has been much censured for his insincerity towards Orestes and Electra, but considering his almost powerless position against the friends of Ægisthus and Tyndarus combined, we cannot (in reason) so much blame the caution he recommends always remembering that success gains praise, whilst failure (although our best efforts may have been used) mostly creates discontent. Menelaus now being gone, Orestes contemptuously says,—

"Thou doughty\* champion of thy wife, good else

"For nought, in thy friend's cause a coward base,

"Thus doth thou slight me, turn thee thus away?

"Are Agamemnon's favours thus repaid?

"Thou hadst no friend, my father, in thy ills.

"Ah me! I am betrayed;† e'en Hope forsakes me,

"And leaves me unprotected to my fate,

"Who on his shelt'ring pow'r alone relied.—

"But from his Phocians, see, with hasty step

"Here comes a friend indeed, my Pylades,

"A pleasing sight: for in distress a friend

"Comes like a calm to the toss'd mariner."

Orestes expresses his distrust of Menelaus' good offices, and he compares his professed sincerity to that of Pylades, which is true. Pylades now enters in great haste to urge Orestes to take his sister with them and leave the city together, for he, like them, is also in distress, as his father has banished him his native land for assisting in Clytemnestra's death. After further

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\* Soft, yielding. The remark is made in reference to his being so easily duped by Helena into forgiving her and taking her back. Orestes makes this remark "doughty" in contempt.

† Deserted.

conversation, they decide it is better for Orestes to go boldly before the Assembly, and plead his own cause, alleging, as a justification, his killing his mother because she destroyed his father. Orestes and Pylades retire for this purpose, and on the other side enter Electra, the Chorus, and a messenger.

“ MESSENGER.

“ Unhappy daughter of that mighty chief,  
 “ Who led the pow’rs of Greece, rever’d Electra,  
 “ How shall my tongue disclose this tale of woe ?  
 “ I left my rural cottage, and the gates  
 “ Of Argos enter’d, with fond wish to learn  
 “ To thee and to Orestes what had chanc’d,  
 “ Prompted by that high reverence which I bore  
 “ Thy father ; for his house supported me,  
 “ Though poor, yet not unfaithfull. Soon I saw  
 “ The thronging people hurry to that height  
 “ Where, as they say, Ægyptus gave them seats  
 “ When Danaus was adjudged to punishment.\*  
 “ Astonish’d at the sight I ask’d if war  
 “ New threat’ning rous’d the city thus : and Argive  
 “ Gave answer, Seest thou not Orestes there ?  
 “ He goes to plead his cause ; and life or death  
 “ Hangs on his voice. I look’d, and near me saw,  
 “ O piteous spectacle ! what least I hop’d  
 “ To see, thy brother : as he walk’d, his eyes  
 “ Fix’d on the ground, his fever-weaken’d limbs  
 “ Supported by his friend, whose faithfull care,  
 “ Touch’d with like grief, guided his feeble steps.

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\* At the time the two brothers, Ægyptus and Danaus, were joint sovereigns of Egypt, Ægyptus gathered his adherents here, where they decreed that Danaus should be banished the country, leaving Ægyptus to reign solely ; these brothers were called the *Belides*. When Danaus was turned out of Egypt, he went to Greece in a ship which was called *Varmis* ; this occurred, according to Holwell, in the year 1475, and he designates the vessel which carried Danaus the *Amphiprumnon*. There is very little doubt but Holwell is accurate so far as regards the year of Danaus’ entry into Greece, for we find that he died (after having been there about 50 years) in the year 1425 B.C.

"Soon as th' assembly sate, the herald's voice  
 "Proclaim'd free speech to all, who will'd to speak,  
 "Whether Orestes for his mother slain  
 "Should die, or not. Talthybius\* first arose,  
 "Who with thy father storm'd the tow'rs of Troy:  
 "Double and dark his speech, as one who lives  
 "The slave of greatness ; to thy father high  
 "Respect he paid, but to thy brother's praise  
 "Silent, in honourable terms involv'd  
 "His ill intent, as that he model'd laws  
 "'Gainst parents not beseeming ; but his eye  
 "Always glanc'd cheerfull on Ægisthus' friends :  
 "For such their nature ; the warm shine of fortune  
 "Allures them, vassals to the rich and great.  
 "Next rose the royal Diomedet† ; his voice  
 "Allow'd not death, but exile, to atone  
 "The deed : discordant clamours echoed round.  
 "As approbation prompted, or dislike.  
 "An Argive, not an Argive,‡ next arose,  
 "His birth barbaric, of licentious tongue,  
 "Presumptuous, turbulent, and prompt to lead  
 "With empty noise the populace to ill :  
 "For the smooth tongue that charms to mischief, bears  
 "A pestilent pow'r ; whilst Wisdom, aiming still

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\* This is the same who was in Agamemnon's prosperity a follower of his. In the play of *Hecuba* (which I have described to you), Talthybius was a prominent character ; the description of him here, is that his former powerful patron being no more, he is trying to ingratiate himself into the favour of the now strongest in power, who is supposed to be Tyndarus (temporarily so), until it be ascertained whether Orestes shall be acquitted, and ascend the throne, or if Menelaus is to be vested with the regal power.

† This is the same as Diomedes, he, who before Troy assisted Ulysses to murder Rhesus—he wounded Venus in the arm—he plundered Attica, where he lost the Palladium which he had stolen from Troy—he also helped Ulysses to steal the charmed horses of Rhesus,—he ultimately settled in Italy, and was the founder of the city Argyripa.

‡ This is supposed to allude to the tragic poet Cleophon, who, although of Athenian parents, was born in Thrace. Potter tells us that he comes to this conclusion from the Scholiast ; the meaning of the messenger's remark is this—he who next rose to speak classes as an Athenian, but he is not one thoroughly.



"At virtue, brings its honourable thought,  
 "Though late, to glorious issue ; her grave voice  
 "Authority, that owes its best grace to it,  
 "Should countenance, and check the factious tongue :  
 "This wretch, suborn'd by Tyndarus, clamour'd loud  
 "For death, the harshest death, involving thee  
 "In the same ruin : but another rose  
 "Of different sentiment ; no sightly gaud,  
 "But one in whose plain form the eye might note  
 "A manly, free, direct integrity  
 "Temper'd with prudence ; one who rarely join'd  
 "The city circles, in his small domain,  
 "Which his own culturing hand had to taught to smile,  
 "Passing in honest peace his blameless days :  
 "His voice to Agamemnon's son decreed  
 "A crown, his noble father who aveng'd  
 "By slaying that abandon'd impious woman,  
 "Whose vile deeds check'd the soldier's generous flame ;\*  
 "For who in distant fields, at honour's call,  
 "Would wield his martial arms, if in his absence  
 "Pollution stain his wife, and his pure bed  
 "Be made a foul sty<sup>e</sup> of adulterous lust †  
 "The virtuous all approv'd. Orestes now,  
 "Preventing further argument, advanc'd  
 "And thus address'd, them, Ye illustrious Argives,  
 "Who from a line of antient heroes draw  
 "Your high-born race, to vindicate your honour,  
 "Not less than to avenge my father's death,  
 "I did this deed : for should the husband's blood  
 "Leave on the wife's hand no foul stain, full soon  
 "The purple tide would flow, or you must sink,  
 "O shame to manhood ! vile slaves to your wives.  
 "Now she, that to my father's bed was false,  
 "Hath died for it : if you require my life,  
 "The law hath lost its force ; and who shall say

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\* By this passage it would seem that Agamemnon had either been informed, or was suspicious of, his wife's fidelity previous to his returning to his home, which accounts for the cool and distant manner in which some say they met after their long separation.

† Hamlet also alludes to the bed his mother has sullied as a "foul sty<sup>e</sup> ;" and he accuses her of "adulterous lust."

" His own life is secure, as these bold deeds  
 " From frequency draw force, and mock at justice ?  
 " These truths were lost in air ;\* and that vile talker,  
 " Whose malice call'd for death to both, prevail'd.  
 " Harsh was the sentence, and th' unhappy youth  
 " Scarce gain'd the sad indulgence, leave to die  
 " By his own hand this day :† thou too must die.  
 " Him from th' assembly Pylades with tears  
 " Leads this way, by a few, a faithful few  
 " Accompanied, whose eyes melting with pity  
 " Rain bitter dew : he comes, a dismal sight,  
 " To pierce thy soul with grief. But haste, prepare  
 " The sword : thou too must die : thy high-born race  
 " Avails not, nor the Oracle of Phoebus,  
 " Whose fatal answer brings destruction on you.

" CHORUS.

" Why, miserable virgin, dost thou bend  
 " Thy clouded eye to th' earth ? Why silent thus ?  
 " Give thy griefs voice, and let thy sorrows flow."

Enter Orestes, led in by Pylades, and followed by a few friends ; hereupon Electra rushes into her brother's arms, and asks him how Menelaus behaved, if he pleaded earnestly for their lives ; to which Orestes replies that he did not dare to appear, so falsely has he turned against us. This remark is very reasonably put

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\* The assembly disregarded Orestes' words.

† This was an old custom throughout the whole Eastern world, and is still observed in China and Japan. People being accused of offences against the State (if occupying an elevated position) are permitted, by special favour from the authorities, to embowel themselves, so to save the indignity of an ignominious death by the hands of the executioner, the life of the highest man in the State is often in the hands of the Emperor if he makes up his mind to run the risk of secret assassination from the friends of his victim. It has been known that when a charge has been intended to be made against a person high in position that an intimation has been held out to him from the Emperor that his absence would be a boon ; when the hint has been taken, and acknowledged with gratitude by the victim, who has destroyed himself to save the disgrace of a public charge,

into the mouth of Orestes, but there are many circumstances to be taken into consideration ere we so entirely condemn Menelaus, as many authors have. Some have gone so far (amongst them Schlegel) as to find fault with the poet Euripides for drawing the character of Menelaus "ungrateful." This, to my thinking, only proves the poet greater than his critics, for he suits the character to the worldly circumstances of the case; Menelaus leaves all to chance. In the first place, even suppose him to be actuated by the very best motives towards his brother's children, and that he feels, out of gratitude to his brother's memory, he ought to protect them, we must look at his position, and see how far he himself is in danger, for we must not forget that now his followers are but few, and that his influence in Argos is but small, for even Tyn-darus (his father-in-law) has threatened him that if he sides with the children who murdered their mother, he is to account him his enemy; and we must suppose Tyndarus an enemy of such weight as to be thought of and feared by Menelaus. This being the case, let us look at Menelaus' position. He has not an army at his command to enable him to use threats, his voice can have no persuasion, for he himself is almost universally despised for bringing Helena back with him from Troy, and protecting her (she who had been the immediate cause of the people's misfortunes), for you must not lose sight of this fact, that although it has been made apparent to Menelaus and his few friends, when on the island of Pharos, that Helena is innocent, this belief has not followed them to Argos, for here she is still execrated, the belief being that Menelaus has been imposed upon by Helena and the Egyptian priests. I

am afraid there was too much reason for this supposition. Why may not Helena have arrived at Theoclymenus's dwelling before Menelaus, and have excited him as well as so many other men, hoping thus to escape her husband's fury. Then, is it not probable that after Theoclymenus had gratified his passion, he was not sufficiently enamoured of Helena to run the risk of a conflict with Menelaus, so that he, his priests, Helena, and Theonoe, all put their heads together to devise a scheme to blind Menelaus, and reconcile him to his wife. Such a circumstance might have occurred, and was calculated to give rise to the different opinions existing respecting the manner in which Menelaus took Helena on board ship, on their quitting the Trojan states. One statement is, that he dragged her by the hair of her head, another, that they were entirely reconciled before starting.

Now, to return to Orestes, Electra, and Pylades. These three resolve to die by their own hands, their mutual friendship not parting them even in death. The state has decreed death to Orestes and Electra, permitting them the privilege of dying by their own hands, and the sword is mentioned as the instrument which they intend to use. Pylades is prompted to this end out of friendship for Orestes, and love for Electra, for she having been affianced to him, he says he considers her his wife, and he cannot live without her. Their last thought now is, how to embitter Menelaus' existence, and ere they carry out execution upon themselves, they resolve to assassinate Helena, and they console themselves with the idea that their doing this will incite the people to applaud the deed—their relieving them of that pest. Then Electra suggests,

to further their ends, they shall seize Hermione, and hold her as a hostage, for if Menelaus returns and attempts violence, let us, says she, slay his daughter also; our menacing this, may determine him to save his child, and he may even assist us to escape. They see hope in these suggestions, and resolve to act upon them forthwith.

I will now read to you the finish of this scene, which I consider, gave Shakespeare his idea of the third scene in Hamlet,\* where they talk of the ghost, and Hamlet enjoins the others by an oath (upon his sword) not to divulge what they have seen and heard. I am not comparing the language, it is the situation I speak of. It will take a shrewd reader to trace my notions, but people knowing the scene I allude to, thoroughly, cannot fail to see that this part of the play of Orestes was running in Shakspeare's head whilst he was setting down the part of his play of Hamlet I refer to. Now the scene is occupied by Electra and the Chorus, whilst Orestes and Pylades are within, executing death upon Helena, who is heard to exclaim,—

“Io, Pelasgian Argos, I am slain!”

“My dearest Menelaus,

“I die: where art thou? fly, Oh fly to save me.

Hearing these words, Electra exclaims in transport of joy, exulting in the most ferocious vindictiveness and vengeance.

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\* For these particulars I must refer the reader to the respective scenes in the two tragedies I allude to, as it would take up more space here to explain them, than I consider I am justified in devoting, lest I should be digressing too much from my present theme.



"ELECTRA.

"Hark : their bold hands are in the bloody act.

"It was the cry of Helena, I deem.

"Kill, slay, strike, wound, dispatch, destroy :

"With iron smiles of gloomy joy

"Plunge deep the huge tempestuous blade,

"For blood, for death, for carnage made,

"Deep in her breast. She basely fled

"Her father's house, her husband's bed :

"Hence many' a Greek in battle slain

"Lies mould'ring on the Phrygian plain :

"Hence, to call forth the bursting tear,

"The arrowy show'r, the hurtling spear ;

"And hence Schamander's silver flood

"Whirls his swoln eddies stained with blood.

"CHORUS.

"Hark ! hark ! I hear the sound of feet :

"The marble pavement now they beat.

"ELECTRA.

"Whilst slaughter is at work, my virgin friend,

"Hermione comes : cease we the measure then :

"She walks into our toils,\* a goodly prize.

"Silent resume your stations ; fix'd your eyes,

"Let not your countenance betray the deed.

"My eye shall take again the mournfull cast,

"As unacquainted with this havoc there.

(*Enter* HERMIONE.)

"From Clytemnestra's tomb comest thou, virgin.

"Thy hallow'd offerings and libations paid ?

"HERMIONE.

"I have appeas'd her shade. But from this house

"The voice of loud lament e'er my approach

"Struck my astonish'd ear : it makes me tremble."

\* This way she comes, walking straight into the net we have opened. This word, although a noun, and spelt the same as "Toil," (to labour,)



Here occurs another instance of Electra's temerity, and shows considerable duplicity, for on Hermione's saying she heard cries of distress proceeding from the house Electra replies that they were those of Orestes and herself, as we are doomed to die; then says she, "Orestes is now at thy mother's feet, imploring her to use her influence with Menelaus, that he may intercede for us to save our lives, wilt thou not assist us in our supplications?" The innocent Hermione at once commiserates with Electra, and offers to do all in her power to save her and her brother. Hereupon ensues the most treacherous act of all, and I must tell you that I am not one of the admirers of this character. Bold and intrepid, I grant she is; some of her notions are what many people may call noble and grand, but I think that if revenge, duplicity, and sanguinary purposes may be considered so, then Electra is entitled to the honour in a high degree, not otherwise. To my thinking she has an incarnadine fiendish spirit, towering in pride, arrogance, and superstition; self-conceited, and just that tyrant soul that if she were in prosperity she would be kind and patronizing to those about her; but overbearing, authoritative, and austere, to a degree, towards anyone "stepping betwixt the wind and her nobility." Such self-opiniated fools to my notion are the scum of creation; they abound in certain localities, to the pestiferous contamination of the very atmosphere they pollute, and are stalking shadows of demons' stings. Immediately on receiving Hermione's assurance of her interest, Electra retires to the back of the stage, and calls (through

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has quite a different origin; it is from the Latin word *tela*, (a web.) The French use it in the same sense as we do, spelt *toiles*.

a doorway) to Orestes and Pylades, who are in an inner apartment assassinating Helena.

“ You there within the house, ye armed friends,  
 “ Will you not seize your prize ?  
 “ Here seize her, seize her ; to her trembling breast  
 “ Point your keen swords, and awe her into silence.  
 “ Let Menelaus perceive he hath found Men,  
 “ Not Phrygian slaves ; Men, whose bold spirits dare  
 “ Retort his foul wrongs on his own base head.”

These complaints against Menelaus are most natural, viewing him from the minds of Orestes, Pylades, or Electra, but they are maudling and capricious, carried to the extent they have been by some commentators. Speaking of vices pourtrayed in characters, Schlegel selects Menelaus, as an example, and he quotes Aristotle's opinion as a confirmation of his own; he says that Euripides has “ painted Menelaus black, which is a base and paltry trait of his own arbitrary invention.” I really think that Schlegel has no justification in attributing either of the terms “ base,” “ paltry,” or “ arbitrary,” to Euripides, and his remarking that the poet has painted Menelaus blacker than there was occasion for, is altogether a gratuitous assertion on his part. Euripides has not painted Menelaus a shade darker than appears to me most naturally necessary. It is particularly singular that Schlegel, in the same chapter where he makes the above remarks, has also quoted the oft referred to sentence that, “ Sophocles drew men such as they ought to be, Euripides such as they are.” I think you, my friends, will fairly admit (taking this very quotation into consideration), that I am not much out in saying that Euripides has painted Menelaus in most natural colours, and that if there be anything at all arbi-

trary in the matter, it is in Schlegel's assertion, not in Euripides' delineation. On Electra's calling Orestes and Pylades, they enter, seize Hermione, and carry her off, immediately upon which Electra turns to the Chorus and says :—

“Now, my lov'd virgins, raise your voices high ;  
 “Before the house ring out the notes of woe,  
 “That this bold deed spread no alarm, nor call  
 “Th' astonish'd Argives to these royal gates,  
 “Till I see Helen rolling in her blood  
 “Or from the slaves attending learn her fate.”

I cannot make out the meaning of the second line,

“Before the house ring out the notes of woe,”

unless she means wailing for the fate of Orestes and herself. She cannot mean it in sincerity for Helen, and she cannot mean it for Helen deceitfully, for her object is to make it appear that she nor the Chorus know anything about Helen's death. The last line—

“Or from the slaves attending learn her fate,”

shows clearly that she contemplates receiving the information of Helen's death from Helen's servant, who soon enters. This pet heroine (Electra) of some people, delights in butchering and before the slave enters she expresses a desire to

“See Helen rolling in her blood.”

A slave now comes forth in a state of trepidation, and says that to escape the Grecian swords he climbed up a pillar, and made his way along the rafters of the house. This chicken-hearted creature then appeals to Electra and the Chorus for protection, and in his fears he asks which he shall do, mount the sky or dash into

the billows to get out of the way. After a while Orestes and Pylades enter, they quiet the slave, and the Chorus sing.

“CHORUS.

“Other horrors, other woes  
“Rise this royal house t’enclose.  
“Haste we then to spread th’ alarm,  
“Or keep silence, shunning harm ?  
“See the sudden smoke arise,  
“Waving tidings to the skies !  
“From the torch that dusky wreath  
“Threatens ruin, flames, and death.  
“What event the gods assign,  
“Mortal, to submit is thine.  
“Here some stern relentless pow’r  
“Bade the horrid ruin roar,  
“When the blood-stain’d car beneath  
“Myrtilus\* lay roll’d in death.”

Now Menelaus (having been informed by one of the flying slaves of a mishap occurring to Helen), returns to the house within which Orestes and the rest have fortified themselves. Menelaus calls on those within to unbar the gates, when he is confronted by Orestes, who appears on the battlements with Hermione holding a sword pointed towards her breast. He says,—

“Stand off ; forbear : Spartan, I speak to thee  
“Tow’ring in pride : dare but to touch the gate,  
“I will rend down this ancient pinnacle  
“That crowns the battlements, and crush thy head.”

Here a long contention ensues between Orestes and Menelaus, when the former calls on Electra and Pylades to fire the house, upon which Menelaus is about raising

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\* Myrtilus was thrown into the sea by Pelops ; the line applies more to CEnomaus whom Myrtilus betrayed, and caused him to be thrown from his car and killed.

a cry to bring the citizens to his aid, when Apollo appears, and addresses them thus:—

"Cease, Menelaus, forbear this fiery rage :  
 "Apollo speaks : revere the present God.  
 "And thou, Orestes, whose uplifted sword  
 "Threatens that virgin's life, forbear, and hear.  
 "Her, whom thy rage, to work him woe, assail'd,  
 "This radiant form\* in tissued clouds inshrin'd,  
 "Snatch'd from thy sword I save'd ; such the command  
 "Of Heav'n's high king : his beauteous progeny  
 "Soars above mortal fate, and orb'd in heav'n  
 "Immortal 'midst her kindred stars she shines,  
 "Beaming kind influence on the mariners.  
 "Lead to thy royal house another wife ;  
 "Since by her beauty the just gods awoke  
 "'Twixt Greece and Troy the rage of war, to free  
 "The groaning earth from impious multitudes.  
 "Such is the fate of Helen. Thou Orestes,  
 "Quitting this country, in Parrhasia's† plains  
 "For one revolving year thy dwelling fix,  
 "And give the place thy name ; that honour share  
 "With Azan‡ and with Arcas.§ Pass from thence  
 "To Athens ; there against the Furies urge

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\* To explain this passage it must be understood that Apollo appears suspended amongst machinery resembling clouds, and near him is Helena, whom he points to, when he says, "This radiant form." "His bounteous progeny" also pertains to Helen, she being the offspring of Jove. I have explained in a previous note that Helen was also made a planet of. Chambers calls her a meteor. (I have described it in page 474, second series).

† Situate in Arcadia.

‡ A mountain adjacent to the plain of Parrhasia ; it took its name from Azan, who was a son of Arcas, he was the king of the country, in part with his two brothers, Elatus and Aphidas.

§ He reigned in Arcadia, which country was called after him, having been changed from its previous name, Pelasgia. The mother of Arcus was Calisto (sometimes spelt Callisto), to whom Jupiter went disguised as the goddess Diana. Calisto being one of Diana's attendants did not see the deception, and when she was least aware of it she found herself seduced by a god instead of being merely embraced by a goddess. When



"Thy plea, acquit thee of thy mother's blood :  
 "There\* in that awfull court the gods shall sit  
 "Thy judges ; and thy just cause shall prevail.  
 "Her, at whose throat thy angry sword was pointed  
 "The gods decree thy wife ; though Pyrrhus dreams  
 "Of nuptial joys, the Delphic sword awaits him ; ‡  
 "My vengeance on Achilles this demands.  
 "To Pylades thy sister is betrothed ;  
 "Give him his bride : and happiness attends  
 "To pour her blessings on their future years.  
 "Thou, Menelaus, yield that Orestes reign  
 "At Argos : haste to Sparta, reign thou there,  
 "And wear that crown, the dow'ry of thy wife,  
 "The well-earn'd meed of all the toils she caus'd thee.  
 "It shall be mine t'appease the state to him, §  
 "Compelled by my command to slay his mother.  
 "Go then your ways, now go, and reverence Peace,  
 "Most bounteous of the gods. || I will conduct  
 "Th' immortal Helen to the house of Jove  
 "O'er yon star-spangled sky, to the bright seats

it was discovered that she was pregnant, the goddess Diana (who is always represented as being chaste and virtuous) turned poor Calisto adrift ; and as she wandered in the woods Juno appeared to her, and charged her with tempting her husband Jupiter, for which offence she turned Calisto into a bear. Jupiter watching Juno out of the way went again to Calisto, who now had the child Arcus, both of whom Jupiter placed in the heavens, designating them the constellation—the bear.

\* Mount Mars.

† According to history this is somewhat abstruse, for in Pyrrhus' case it was no dream, for he married Hermione in the first instance. At this time Pyrrhus also had Andromache. We are told that he treated Andromache as his wife ; but it is not stated that he was married to her. Ultimately Hermione murdered Pyrrhus and married Orestes ; others assert that Orestes assassinated Pyrrhus.

‡ By this it would seem that Pyrrhus was murdered, and did not possess Hermione ; but here Euripides is slightly in error.

§ The Argives were ultimately reconciled to Orestes, where he reigned until the ninetieth year of his age, with Hermione as his queen, and his son Tisamenus succeeded him on the throne of Argos.

|| "Most beauteous amongst the gods." Helen being made a goddess could not be one of the gods, unless the expression be taken in the



"Where with majestic Juno, and the bloom  
 "Of Hebe\* ever young, Alcides'† joy,  
 "A goddess she shall hear the vows‡ of mortals:  
 "And honour'd with the twin-born§ sons of Jove,  
 "Guide the tost mariners, and rule the sea."

(*Apollo's commands are at once obeyed, and the play ends.*)

We now return to Iphigenia, whom we left in the hands of the goddess Diana, being carried away by her from the altar at Aulis to be placed as priestess of her temple at Taurica Chersonesus, which is bounded by the *Paulus Mæotis*, the Euxine, and the Bosphorus. The rites performed here at Diana's temple were of the most sanguinary character, and are described by Potter, who quotes Diodorus Siculus, as follows. He says:—"Diodorus Siculus, lib. iv., informs us 'that it was the custom of the barbarians who inhabited that country, to sacrifice such strangers, as were driven on that shore, to the Tauric Diana. Iphigenia, they say, was in after times appointed the priestess of this goddess, and sacrificed such strangers as were taken. In tracing the history of these sacrifices we find that the Sun was father of Æetes and Perses: Æetes reigned at Colchis, Perses

sense that she is one of the godkind, in like manner that a woman is one of mankind.

\* Hebe was a goddess, begotten of Jupiter and Juno. She retained her youthfulness so long that when Hercules became a god she was still young, and enraptured him; they were married, and had two sons, Anicetus and Alexiarses. She is known as *Juventas* and *Dia*. Her statues should always be represented with a variety of flowers and foliage at her feet, on her dress, and a wreath round her head.

† The same as Hercules, which signifies strength—*Amkos*.

‡ The *prayers* of mortals meaning, that when mariners are in distress and pray to the gods for help, that Helena, as a planet, shall shine forth and guide them safely out of danger.

§ Castor and Pollux.

in the Tauric Chersonese, both remarkable for their savage cruelty. Hecate was the daughter of Perses, and exceeded her father in daring and atrocious actions; she took great delight in hunting, and when she failed of success in the chase, transfixing men with her arrows, instead of beasts. She was fond of preparing compositions of a poisonous nature; to try the force of which she mixed them with the food given to strangers. Having acquired great experience in these things, she destroyed her father with poison, and took possession of his kingdom: she then built the temple of Diana, and appointed that the strangers who arrived there should be sacrificed to the goddess: hence her name became terrible for her barbarity. She afterwards married Æetes, and was by him the mother of Circe and Medea.' Iphigenia had for some years, reluctantly indeed, but through necessity, presided over these inhuman rites. when Orestes, with his friend Pylades, arrived on this inhospitable coast, in obedience to the oracle of Apollo. They were seized and carried to the king, who sent them in chains to the priestess as victims to the goddess. Their death now seemed inevitable. The drama is conducted with exquisite skill, and the circumstances arise out of each other so naturally, that, as P. Brumoy well observes, the piece has such an air of truth, that the spectator is persuaded that the event really passed, as it is presented to him, and that it could not have passed in any other manner." I quite agree with Diodorus Siculus, and it is clear that Potter is of the same opinion. What then becomes of Schlegel's arbitrary egotism. I now end my Twentieth Lecture.

## LECTURE XXIII.

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The characters represented in *Iphigenia of Tauris*, are Iphigenia, Orestes, Pylades, Thoas, a Herdsman, a Messenger, and the Chorus. These are composed of Grecian women attendants on Iphigenia, so that it would seem that although they here sacrificed men (strangers), they did not kill women. This goes to prove that although the ancients did not admit females to an equal status in society, they were more lenient with them as regards life and death. This is to be attributed to the women being less feared than men. They were morally weaker, as well as physically so, and when taken in captivity they submitted to their fate with resignation, and often cheerfully, so that they were seldom killed, excepting in very extreme cases. I have before explained to you the characters herein introduced, excepting Thoas. He was a son of Ariadne, she the daughter of Minos, second King of Crete, whose father's name was Lycastus, king of Arcadia, and his grandfather was Minos, the first king of Crete; this same Ariadne was seduced by Theseus, and afterwards had Thoas by the god Bacchus (at least such was her assertion and the peoples' belief). It is quite clear that a sort of superstitious fanaticism existed, as women (particularly the higher classes) put no restraint upon their passions, and when the results

were the births of little cherubim they were invariably made the offsprings of the gods. I should here pause to tell you that I have spelt the foregoing word *cherubim*, and, as it is commonly spelt so, I think I ought to explain to you that the correct English way to spell the word is *cherubins*. The former sound is more applicable to the Hebrew language, and is the plural of כְּרוּב the כְּרוּבִים. The most extraordinary part of the business was, that when those most immediately affected by these deceptions knew that mortals were more concerned than the gods, they did not raise questions of doubt against the ladies; this must have been through fear of offending the god, the respective amours were attributed to; men knowing these things with their eyes open, shrugged up their shoulders, and sooner doubted ocular demonstration than the power of the gods. Something like this belief exists at the Agapemone,—the ladies we are told have spiritual husbands, so also do the Mormons have spiritual wives. Bacchus placed Thoas on the throne of Lemnos, through the instrumentality of Rhadamanthus, who was also a god, a son of Jupiter and Europa. The women of Lemnos conspired and destroyed all the men, and would have sacrificed Thoas also, had not his daughter Hypsipyle saved him and sent him to Taurica where he became king. The play commences by Iphigenia relating the circumstances of her life; amongst these she describes that the original cause of her having to be sacrificed at Aulis, was through her father's vowing he would offer the most beautiful thing the year produced to the goddess Diana (this occurred the same year Iphigenia was born), so that when the fleet was detained at Aulis, Calchas reminded Agamemnon of his

oath, and interpreted it, so that in assigning to Iphigenia the most peerless grace of beauty, he also assigned her to become the sacrifice to Diana. Iphigenia remarks that the rites of the temple of Diana are for her (as the priestess) to prepare the victims, but, says she,

“The deed of blood too horrid to be told devolves  
On others within the temple.”

She then speaks of having been troubled the previous night with foreboding dreams, and, says she, to relieve my troubled thoughts, I will relate them “to the air.” It seemed to me that whilst I was asleep I was carried to Argos, where, resting on a couch, surrounded by my virgin attendants, I felt a shock like an earthquake; I started up and fled from the house; then, standing in the street to look upon the castle of my forefathers, I saw it tumble to the ground. All was ruin! nothing left standing excepting one pillar upon which methought I saw a head of human hair, and it assumed a human voice. I now expound my dream thus: Orestes my only brother was the last remaining pillar of our house, and he is dead, but what can be the meaning of my attendant’s absence—I will seek them.

[*Exit within the temple*].

Enter Orestes and Pylades. Keep careful watch. Pylades, says Orestes, dost thou think this is the temple of the goddess? I think so, so must you, says Pylades; there cannot be much doubt about it, see there the spoils of the stranger victims, all gory hanging on the battlements.

“ORESTES.

“Behoves us then to watch with careful eye.

“O Phœbus, by thy oracles again

"Why hast thou led me to these toils ? E'er since  
 "In vengeance for my father's blood I slew  
 "My mother, ceaseless by the Furies driv'n,  
 "Vagrant, an out-cast, many' a bending\* course  
 "My feet have trod : to thee I came, of thee  
 "Inquir'd this whirling frenzy by what means,  
 "And by what means my labours I might end.  
 "Thy voice commanded me to speed my course  
 "To this wild coast of Tauris, where a shrine  
 "Thy sister hath, Diana ; thence to take  
 "The statue of the goddess, which from heav'n,  
 "So say the natives, to this temple fell :  
 "This image or by fraud or fortune won,  
 "The dangerous toil achiev'd, to place the prize  
 "In the Athenian land : no more was said ;  
 "But that performing this I should obtain  
 "Rest from my toils. Obedient to thy words  
 "On this unknown, unhospitable coast  
 "Am I arriv'd. Now, Pylades, for thou  
 "Art my associate in this dangerous task,  
 "Of thee I ask, What shall we do ? for high  
 "The walls, thou seest, which fence the temple round :  
 "Shall we ascend their height ? But how escape  
 "Observing eyes ? Or burst the brazen bars ?  
 "Of these we nothing know :† in the attempt  
 "To force the gates, or meditating‡ means  
 "To enter, if detected, we shall die.  
 "Shall we them, e'er we die, by flight regain  
 "The ship, in which we hither plough'd the sea ?

PYLADES.

"Of flight we brook no thought, nor such hath been  
 "Our wont ; nor may the god's commanding voice  
 "Be disobey'd : but from the temple now  
 "Retiring, in some cave, which the black sea  
 "Beats with its billows, we may lie conceal'd  
 "At distance from our bark, lest some, whose eyes  
 "May note it, bear the tidings to the king,

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\* Devious.

† We are not aware of their strength.

‡ Devising.



"And we be seiz'd by force. But when the eye  
 "Of night comes darkling on, then must we dare,  
 "And take the polisht image from the shrine,  
 "Attempting all things : and the vacant space  
 "Between the triglyphs,\* mark it well, enough  
 "Is open to admit us ; by that way  
 "Attempt we to descend : in toils the brave  
 "Are daring ; of no worth the abject soul.†

"ORESTES.

"This length of sea we plough'd not from this coast,  
 "Nothing effected, to return :‡ but well  
 "Hast thou advis'd ; the god must be obey'd.  
 "Retire we then where we may lie conceal'd :  
 "For never from the god will come the cause  
 "That what his sacred voice commands should fall  
 "Effectless. We must dare. No toil to youth  
 "Excuse, which justifies inaction brings."

[Exit ORESTES and PYLADES.

*Enter IPHIGENIA and CHORUS.*

"STROPHE 1ST.

"Ye rocks, ye clashing rocks, whose brow  
 "Frowns o'er the darken'd deeps below,  
 "Whose wild inhospitable wave,  
 "From Argos flying and her native spring,  
 "The virgin§ once was known to brave,

\* Webster's definition of a Triglyph is as follows :—

[Gr. *τρεις* three, and *γλυφη*, sculpture.]

An ornament in frieze of the Doric column, repeated at equal intervals. Each triglyph consists of two entire gutters or channels, cut to a right angle, called *glyphs*, and separated by three interstices, called *femora*. Webster quotes, as his authority for this definition, the *Cyclopaedia*.

† Brave people when hard pressed by circumstances become daring in their enterprises but abject people become timorous, and fail through fear.

‡ After having ploughed the length of sea we have to reach this coast it will not do to return, having effected nothing towards the end of our project.

§ Io.

" Tormented with the Bryze's\* mad'ning sting,  
 " From Europe when the rude sea o'er  
 " She pass'd to Asia's adverse shore ;  
 " Who are these hapless youths, that dare to land,  
 " Leaving those soft irriguous meads,  
 " Where, his green margin fring'd with reeds,  
 " Eurotas† rolls his ample tide,  
 " Or Dirce's‡ hallow'd waters glide,  
 " And touch this barb'rous, stranger-hating strand,  
 " The altars where a virgin dew  
 " And blood the pillar'd shrine imbrues ?

" STROPHE 2ND.

" Did they with oars impetuous sweep,  
 " Rank answering rank,§ the foamy deep,  
 " And wing their bark with flying sails,  
 " To raise their humble fortune their desire,  
 " Eager to catch the rising gales  
 " Their bosoms with the love of gain on fire ?  
 " For sweet is Hope, to man's fond breast,  
 " The Hope of gain, insatiate guest,  
 " Though on her oft attends Misfortune's train :  
 " For daring men she tempts to brave  
 " The dangers of the boist'rous wave,  
 " And leads him heedless of his fate

\* The Gad-fly, or *Borinus* ; it has two hooks in its mouth, which it uses to pierce the animal it attacks. It has a third organ called a proboscis, with this it sucks the blood from the holes the hooks have pierced.

† This is the same as the Basilipotamos, a river passing through Laconia. The "green margin" alludes to the quantities of laurels and myrtles that grew here. This same river at one period was worshipped by the Spartans, simply, and for no other reason than that it was the most extensive stream they knew of ; this is another instance of the ancients' imaginative propensities.

‡ Dirce was tied to the tail of a wild bull by Amphion and Zethus for imprisoning their mother Antiope. Dirce was delivered from her perilous position, and changed into a fountain by the gods, to enable her to escape from the persecutions of her tormentors.

§ This merely means the rowers keeping stroke with oars.

- "Through many a distant, barb'rous state ;  
 "Vain his opinions, his pursuits are vain !  
 "Boundless o'er some her pow'r is shown,  
 "But some her temp'rate influence own.

## "ANTISTROPHE 1ST.

- "How did they pass the dang'rous rocks  
 "Clashing with rude, tremendous shocks ?  
 "How pass the savage-howling shore  
 "Where once th' unhappy Phineus\* held his reign,  
 "And sleep affrighted flies its roar,  
 "Steering their rough course o'er the boist'rous main,  
 "Form'd in a ring beneath whose waves  
 "The Nereid train in high-arched caves  
 "Weave the light dance, and raise the sprightly song,  
 "Whilst whisp'ring in their swelling sails  
 "Soft Zephyrs breathe, or southern gales  
 "Piping amidst their tackling play,  
 "As their bark ploughs its watry way  
 "Those hoary cliffs, the haunt of birds, along,  
 "To that wild strand, the rapid race  
 "Where once Achilles deign'd to grace ?

## "ANTISTROPHE 2ND.

- "Oh that from Troy some chance would bear  
 "Leda's lov'd daughter, fatal fair,  
 "(The royal virgin's vows are mine,)
- "That, her bright tresses rolled in crimson dew,  
 "Her warm blood flowing at this shrine
- "The altar of the goddess might imbrue,  
 "And Vengeance, righteous to repay  
 "Her former mischiefs, sieze her prey !
- "But with what rapture should I hear his voice,  
 "If one this shore should reach from Greece,  
 "And bid the toils of slav'ry cease !  
 "Or might I in the hour of rest  
 "With pleasing dreams of Greece be blest,

\* King of Thrace.

"So in my house, my native land rejoice,  
 "In sleep enjoy the pleasing strain  
 "For happiness restor'd again !

"IPHIGENIA.

"But the two youths, their hands fast bound in chains,  
 "The late-seiz'd victims to the goddess, come.  
 "Silence, my friends : for destin'd at the shrine  
 "To bleed, the Grecian strangers near approach :  
 "And no false tidings did the herdsman bring."

"CHORUS.

"Goddess\* rever'd, if gratefull to thy soul  
 "This state presents such sacrifice, accept  
 "The victims, which the custom of this land  
 "Gives thee but deem'd unholy by the Greeks."

[ORESTES and PYLADES are brought in.

I wish to know which of you is Pylades? says Iphigenia, and to what Grecian state does he belong? Are you brothers? What names were given you by your father? (There is a slight discrepancy here, for she knows the name of Pylades, as this has been brought her by a herdsman, and as people were only called by their Christian names, she could only want to know Orestes' name) ; she is addressing them both, but in the acting it could easily be rectified by her turning to Orestes, and addressing this line to him personally,—

"To thee, what name was by thy father given?"

Orestes replies,—

"Dying unknown rude scoffs I shall avoid,

\* Diana.

"My body thou may'st kill, but not my name.  
"The question nought avails since I must die."

My birthplace is Mycenæ : to me it was once the blest. I will tell thee everything excepting my own private affairs. If it is to your joy I come from Argos, enjoy it, but it is no joy to me having to leave there.

Iphigenia now asks Orestes a variety of questions respecting Troy, Argos, and the same matters which I have told you of already. One of her inquiries is after the priest, Calchas, to know if he returned safe to Argos, and upon being told that at Mycenæ the report is that he perished, she exclaims, "Goddess rever'd." This exclamation I take to be tantamount to our exclaiming, "the Lord be praised," as we do often when we are told of things that please us, or are beneficial to us. Iphigenia could not have had much love for the old priest, who, by his prognostications, occasioned her such dire sufferings as she had to go through. She is so minute in all her inquiries respecting Greece, Achilles, Ulysses, and the rest, that Orestes becomes astonished, and he says,—

"But who art thou, enquiring thus of Greece?"

I am from there, says she. O tell me something of the chief they call the blest, royal Agamemnon, and cheer my soul. Upon Orestes telling her he is dead, she sighs, and he asks her why she mourns, how it touches her so closely? She continues to inquire, and, by degrees, gets from him the whole history of what has transpired. She now asks him to take a letter for her to Argos, that she will save his life if he will do so, but he prefers that Pylades shall be spared, and proposes this, to which Iphigenia says,—

"Excellent spirit! from some noble root  
 "It shows the spring, and to thy friends a friend  
 "Sincere: of those that share my blood if one  
 "Remains, such may he be; for I am not  
 "Without a brother,\* stranger, from my sight  
 "Though distant now. Since then my wish is such,  
 "Him will I send to Argos, he shall bear  
 "My letter, thou shalt die; for this desire  
 "Hath strong possession of thy noble soul."

Further conversation ensues between Orestes and Iphigenia, during which she tells him it is her office to prepare him for the sacrifice. She is constrained to this, and is compelled to obey, but the actual deed will not be done by her, as he will be passed from here into the interior of the temple, where other hands will despatch him by the sword, after which his body will be burnt, and his ashes deposited in a cave.

"ORESTES.

"Oh that a sister's hand might wrap these limbs.

"IPHIGENIA.

"Vain wish, unhappy youth, whoe'er thou art,  
 "Hast thou conceived, for from this barbarous land  
 "Far is her dwelling. Yet of what my pow'r  
 "Permits, since thou from Argos draw'st thy birth,  
 "No grace will I omit: for in thy tomb  
 "I will place much of ornament, and pour  
 "The dulcet labour of the yellow bee,  
 "From mountain flow'rs extracted, on thy pyre.  
 "But I will go, and from the temple bring  
 "The letter: yet 'gainst me no hostile thought†

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\* Here is another disparity in her expressions, for she has previously, when speaking of her dreams, prognostigated that Orestes is dead.

† No unfavourable opinion form of me personally, for my will is not to the part I am constrained to perform in this ceremony.



"Conceive. You, that attend here, guard them well.  
 "But without chains. To one, whom most I love  
 "Of all my friends, to Argos I shall send  
 "Tidings perchance unlook'd for ; and this letter ;  
 "Declaring those, whom he thought dead, alive,  
 "Shall bear him an assur'd and solid joy.

*Exit* IPHIGENIA.

" ORESTES.

"By the gods, Pylades, is thy mind touch'd  
 "In manner like as mine ?  
 "Who is this virgin ? With what zeal for Greece  
 "Made she inquiries of us what the toils  
 "At Troy, if yet the Grecians were return'd,  
 "And Calchas, from the flight of birds who form'd  
 "Presages of the future ? And she mam'd  
 "Achilles : with what tenderness bewail'd  
 "Th' unhappy Agamemnon ! of his wife  
 "She ask'd me, of his children : thence her race  
 "This unknown virgin draws, an Argive ; else  
 "Ne'er would she send this letter, nor have wish'd  
 "To know these things, as if she bore a share,  
 "If Argos flourish, in its prosperous state."

Here Pylades laments that Orestes is to be left behind and die, and declares that he will not let it be so, for as he has hitherto shared all other dangers with him, so will he share death, to which Orestes replies:

" ORESTES.

"Speak more auspicious words : 'tis mine to bear  
 "Ills that are mine : and single when the woe,  
 "I would not bear it double. What thou say'st  
 "Is vile and infamous, would light on me,  
 "Should I cause thee to die, who in my toils  
 "Hast borne a share : to me, who from the gods  
 "Suffer afflictions which I suffer, death  
 "Is not unwelcome : thou art happy, thine

"An unpolluted and a prosperous house ;\*  
 "Mine impious and unblest : if thou art sav'd,  
 "And from my sister, whom I gave to thee  
 "Betroth'd thy bride, art bless'd with sons, my name  
 "May yet remain, nor all my father's house  
 "In total ruin sink. Go then, and live ;  
 "Dwell in the mansion of thy ancestors.  
 "And when thou com'st to Greece, to Argos fam'd  
 "For warrior-steeds, by this right hand I charge thee  
 "Raise a sepulchral mound, and on it place  
 "A monument to me ; and to my tomb  
 "Her tears, her tresses let my sister† give :  
 "And say that by an Argive woman's hand  
 "I perish'd, to the altar's bloody rites  
 "An hallow'd victim. Never let thy soul  
 "Betray my sister, for thou seest her state  
 "Of friends how destitute, her father's house  
 "How desolate. Farewell. Of all my friends  
 "Thee I have found most friendly, from my youth  
 "Train'd up with me, in all my sylvan sports  
 "Thou dear associate, and through many toils  
 "Thou faithfull partner of my miseries.  
 "Me Phœbus, though a prophet, hath deceiv'd,  
 "And meditating guile hath driv'n me far  
 "From Greece, of former oracles asham'd ;  
 "To him resign'd, obedient to his words,  
 "I slew my mother, and my meed is death.

"PYLADES.

"Yes, I will raise thy tomb : thy sister's bed  
 "I never will betray, unhappy youth,

\* This is another inconsistent remark, for the house of Pylades to him is neither happy nor prosperous, for he has been banished from it by his father for taking the part he has in Orestes' behalf.

† Electra.

‡ This alludes to the sister of Agamemnon, whom Strophius married, Iphigenia contemplating, says, yes, I think I remember something of the alliance, but this gentleman (alluding to Pylades) was not yet born when my father offered me a sacrifice.

" For I will hold thee dearer when thou'art dead,  
 " Than while thou livest ; nor hath yet the voice  
 " Of Phœbus quite destroy'd thee, though thou stand  
 " To slaughter nigh : but sometimes mighty woes  
 " Yield mighty changes, so when fortune wills.

" ORESTES.

" Forbear : the words of Phœbus nought avail me :  
 " For passing from the shrine the virgin comes."

Here Iphigenia re-enters and sends the guard away to prepare what is required for the rites of the ceremony; then giving Pylades the letter, she says she fears that when he gets out of danger and is safely back at Argos, he will think her letter of little moment, and she asks him to make oath that he will bear it direct with—

" This message to Orestes, to the son  
 " Of Agamemnon bear : she, who was slain  
 " At Aulis, Iphigenia, sends thee this :  
 " She lives, but not to those who then were there."

This last line,

" She lives, but not to those who then were there,"

means, that to all who were present at her supposed sacrifice at Aulis, it is decreed that it must still seem as if she is dead but not to others ; now this is very close upon Orestes, for he was at Aulis with his mother, Clytemnestra, though not actually at the sacrifice. It will be remembered by my friends who were present on the occasion when I lectured upon this particular part of the history, that I named to them that Orestes was then a little boy, a mere child, when Iphigenia addressing him, kiss'd him and said—

"Far as thou couldst thou didst assist thy friends."

Her meaning then was, that the child appealed by looks and with tears in his eyes, to their father to save her, he (now a man) has no recollection of the circumstance, nor does she trace in him the same individual, he exclaims—

"Where is she ? From the dead return'd to life.

"IPHIGENIA.

"She whom thou seest : but interrupt me not.

"To Argos O my brother, e'er I die

"Bear me from this barbaric land, and far

"Remove me from this altar's bloody rites,

"At which to slay the stranger is my charge."

As yet she does not know Orestes, the foregoing appeal is made to Pylades to be borne to Orestes, who now turns to his friend, fancying they are bewitched, and exclaims—

"What shall I say ? where are we Pylades ?"

And he calls on the gods, in surprise, on hearing her impress her name a second time on Pylades, so that he may not forget it. Tell him, says she, that the goddess saved me and placed me in this land ; there, go, this is my charge, my letter speaks the rest.

"PYLADES.

"Oh thou hast bound me with an easy oath :

"What I have sworn with honest purpose long

"Defer I not, but thus discharge mine oath."

Then, turning to Orestes, he hands him the letter saying—

"To thee a letter from thy sister, lo,

"I bear, Orestes ; and I give it thee.

“ORESTES.

“I do receive it, but forbear t’unclose  
 “Its foldings, greater pleasure first t’enjoy  
 “Than words can give, my sister, O most dear,  
 “Astonish’d e’en to disbelief I throw  
 “Mine arms around thee with a fond embrace,  
 “In transports at the wond’rous things I hear.”

Hereupon Orestes is about embracing his sister, when she turns away, and the Chorus interpose telling him he does not well to pollute the priestess. What says he—

“My sister, my dear sister, from one sire,  
 “From Agamemnon sprung, turn not away,  
 “Holding thy brother thus beyond all hope.”

“Beyond all hope” means that the chance was so great against their meeting as they now do, that there would scarcely seem that such a hope could be anticipated. Iphigenia is equally astonished, but asks Orestes to give her proof, he does so by relating a variety of circumstances which have transpired to their family besides domestic arrangement, amongst them he tells her that in her chamber the old spear of Pelops hung, with which he slew Ænomaus before marrying his daughter Hippodamia; part of this story I have told you previously, but I think I omitted to tell you that, when Myrtilus betrayed his master Ænomaus, he placed a broken chariot to his use to run the race against Pelops and thereby caused him to be killed, after which Myrtilus asked Pelops for his reward the embraces of Hippodamia, to which Pelops replied by throwing him into the sea, hearing all this Iphigenia exclaims—

“O thou most dear, for thou art he, most dear  
 “Acknowledg’d, thee, Orestes, do I hold,

"From Argos, from thy country distant far  
 "Thee yet an infant in thy nurse's arms  
 "I left, a babe I left thee in the house.  
 "Thou art more happy, O my soul, than speech  
 "Knows to express : what shall I say ? 'tis all  
 "Surpassing wonder and the pow'r of words,  
 "An unexpected pleasure, O my friends,  
 "Have I receiv'd : yet fear I from my hands  
 "Lest to the air it fly."

It is scarcely recognizable that Euripides should make the mistake, first to describe Orestes at Aulis when Iphigenia was sacrificed, and now make her say she left him an infant, at their parents' house at Argos, in his nurse's arms ; it is jumping that part altogether, where she herself took him into her own arms, and bid him adieu before she ascended the hill to the Temple at Aulis, when she says—

"An unexpected pleasure, O my friends,  
 "Have I received : "

These words are addressed to her female attendants, then reflecting, says she—

"Yet fear I from my hands  
 "Lest to the air it fly."

Her meaning is, she may yet have to lose the pleasure, for she may be compelled to complete the sacrifice to which Orestes has been assigned.

#### "IPHIGENIA.

"Dreadfull, my brother, oh how dreadfull : Scarce  
 "Hast thou escap'd a foul unhallow'd death,  
 "Slain by my hands. But how will these end ?  
 "What fortune will assist me ? What safe means  
 "Shall I devise to send thee from this state,  
 "From slaughter, to thy native land, to Argos,



"E'er with thy blood the cruel sword be stain'd ?  
"This to devise, O my unhappy soul !  
"This to devise is thine. Wilt thou by land,  
"Thy bark deserted, speed thy flight on foot ?  
"Perils await thee 'midst these barbarous tribes  
"Through pathless wilds. And 'twixt the clashing rocks  
"Narrow the passage for the flying bark,  
"And long. Unhappy, ah unhappy me !  
"What god, what mortal, what unlook'd for chance  
"Will expedite our dangerous way, and show  
"Two sprung from Atreus a release from ills ?

"PYLADES.

"When after absence long, Orestes, friend  
"Meets friend, embraces will express their joy.  
"Behoves us now, bidding farewell to grief  
"And heedfull to obtain the glorious name,  
"Of safety, from this barbarous land to fly.  
"The wise, of fortune not regardless, seize  
"Th' occasion, and to happiness advance.

"ORESTES.

"Well has thou said ; and Fortune here, I ween,  
"Will aid us ; to the firm and strenuous mind  
"More potent works the influence divine.

"IPHIGENIA.

"Nothing shall check, nothing restrain my speech :  
"First will I question thee what fortune waits  
"Electra ; this to know would yield me joy.

"ORESTES.

"With him\* she dwells, and happy is her life.

"IPHIGENIA.

"Whence then is he ? and from what father sprung ?

---

\* Pointing to Pylades.

" ORESTES.

" From Phocis : Strophius is his father nam'd.

" IPHIGENIA.

" By Atreus's daughter\* to my blood allied ?

" He was not then,† me when my father slew.

" ORESTES.

" Childless was Strophius for some length of time.

" IPHIGENIA.

" O thou, the husband of my sister, hail !

" ORESTES.

" More than relation, my preserver too.

" IPHIGENIA.

" But to thy mother why that dreadful dead ?

" But for what cause did she her husband slay ?

" The eyes of Argos now are raised to thee.

" ORESTES.

" There Menelaus is lord ; I, out-cast, fly.

" IPHIGENIA.

" Hath he then wrong'd his brother's ruin'd house ?

" ORESTES.

" Not so : the Furies fright me from the land.

" I was not first beheld unhappy there.

" And ruthless make me champ the bloody bit.

" Commanded by Apollo's voice I come.

---

\* Sister to Agamemnon, whom Strophius married.

† He was not then born.

## "IPHIGENIA.

"With what intent ? if that may be disclos'd.

## "ORESTES.

"I will inform thee, though to length of speech  
 "This leads. When vengeance from my hands o'ertook  
 "My mother's deeds, foul deeds which let me pass  
 "In silence, by the Furies' fierce assaults  
 "To flight I was impell'd : to Athens then  
 "Apollo sent me, that, my cause there heard,  
 "I might appease the vengefull powers, whose names  
 "May not be utter'd : the tribunal there  
 "Is holy, which for Mars when stain'd with blood  
 "Jove in old times establish'd. There arriv'd  
 "None willingly receiv'd me, by the gods  
 "As one abhorr'd ; and they who felt the touch  
 "Of shame, the hospitable board alone  
 "Yielded, and though one common roof beneath,  
 "Their silence showing they disdain'd to hold  
 "Converse with me, I took from them apart  
 "A lone repast : to each was plac'd a bowl  
 "Of the same measure ; this they fill'd with wine,  
 "And bathed their spirits in delight. Unmeet  
 "I deem'd it to express offence at those  
 "Who entertain'd me, but in silence griev'd,  
 "Showing a chear as though I mark'd it not  
 "And sigh'd for that I shed my mother's blood.  
 "A feast, I hear, at Athens is ordain'd  
 "From this my evil plight, e'en yet observ'd,  
 "In which the equal measur'd bowl then us'd  
 "Is by that people held in honour high.  
 "But when to the tribunal on the mount  
 "Of Mars I came, one stand I took, and one  
 "The eldest of the Furies opposite.  
 "The cause was heard touching my mother's blood,  
 "And Phœbus sav'd me by his evidence ;  
 "Equal, by Pallas number'd,\* were the votes,  
 "And I from doom of blood victorious freed.

---

\* The votes by the assembly for his death were equal ; so that he escaped through Phœbus' protection.

"Such of the Furies as there sate, appeas'd  
 "By the just sentence, nigh the court resolv'd  
 "To fix their seat; but others, whom the law  
 "Appeas'd not, with relentless tortures still  
 "Pursued me, till I reach'd the hallow'd soil  
 "Of Phœbus; stretch'd before his shrine I swore  
 "Foodless to waste my wretched life away,  
 "Unless the god, by whom I was undone,  
 "Would save me: from the golden tripod burst  
 "The voice divine, and sent me to this shore,  
 "Commanding me to bear the image hence,  
 "Which fell from Jove, and in th' Athenian land  
 "To fix it:\* what th' oracular voice assign'd  
 "My safety, do thou aid: if we obtain  
 "The statue of the goddess, I no more  
 "With madness shall be tortur'd, but this arm  
 "Shall place thee in my bark, which ploughs the waves  
 "With many an oar, and to Mycenæ safe  
 "Bear thee again. Show then a sister's love,  
 "O thou most dear, preserve thy father's house,  
 "Preserve me too; for me destruction waits,  
 "And all the race of Pelops, if we bear not  
 "This heav'n-descended image from the shrine.

#### "IPHIGENIA

"E'er thy arrival here, a fond desire  
 "To be again at Argos, and to see  
 "Thee, my lov'd brother, fill'd my soul. Thy wish  
 "Is my warm wish, to free thee from thy toils,  
 "And from its ruins raise my father's house;  
 "Nor harbour I 'gainst him, that slew me, thought  
 "Of harsh resentment: from thy blood my hands  
 "Would I keep pure, thy house I would preserve.  
 "But from the goddess how may this be hid?  
 "The tyrant† too I fear, when he shall find

---

\* This statue was brought to Athens, where they abolished the inhuman custom of offering people as sacrifices; they substituted goats and other animals, and held an annual festival to the honour of Dianah.

† Thoas.

"The statue on its marble base no more.  
 "What then from death will save me? What excuse  
 "Shall I devise? Yet by one daring deed  
 "Might these things be atchiev'd, cou'dst thou bear hence  
 "The image, me too in thy gallant bark  
 "Placing secure, how glorious were th' attempt!  
 "Me if thou join not with thee, I am lost  
 "Indeed; but thou, with prudent measures form'd,  
 "Return; I fly no danger, not e'en death,  
 "Be death requir'd, to save thee: no: the man  
 "Dying is mourn'd as to his house a loss;  
 "But woman's weakness is of light esteem.

" ORESTES.

"I would not be the murderer of my mother,  
 "And of thee too; sufficient is her blood.  
 "No; I will share thy fortune, live with thee,  
 "Or with thee die: to Argos I will lead thee,  
 "If here I perish not; or dying here  
 "Remain with thee. But what my mind suggests  
 "Hear: if Diana were averse to this,  
 "How could the voice of Phœbus from his shrine  
 "Declare that to the state of Pallas hence  
 "The statue of the goddess I should bear,  
 "And see thy face? All this together weigh'd  
 "Gives hope of fair success, and our return.

" IPHIGENIA.

"But how effect it, that we neither die,  
 "And what we wish atchieve? For our return  
 "On this depends: this claims deliberate thought."

They now determine to attempt the adventure, and take the statue with them. Iphigenia makes confidants of the Chorus, then sends Orestes and Pylades within the temple, whilst she herself goes to fetch the statue. Then Thoas seeing her with it in her arms asks her the meaning, to which she says, Ominous things have transpired, the victims are impure. I dis-

covered this by the sacred image turning back upon its base, and it averted its eyes. So horrible are the crimes of the victims that they are polluted with the blood of their mother, which made the statue start back, and I must now purify it in the air. Then she adds that she must take it with her and the victims, to the sea shore, there to cleanse them from impurity. To all this Thoas assents, he believing her that she is acting from motives influenced by the goddess Diana, and to disguise her intentions further, she asks for chains to put upon Orestes and Pylades. These are ordered by the King, and everything she asks for ; besides which she cautions him to keep in the temple, and his people within their houses, for fear of pollution from the ceremony she says she is going to perform. All her deceptions succeed, and she leaves the stage with Orestes and Pylades for the apparent purpose of cleansing the victims and the idol, but, in fact, intending all the while to mount Orestes' ship and leave the country, taking with them the figure. During their absence the Chorus sing :

“ CHORUS.

“ Latona's glorious offspring claims the song  
“ Born the hallow'd shades among  
“ Where fruitfull Delos\* winds her valleys low ;  
“ Bright-hair'd Phœbus skill'd t' inspire  
“ Raptures as he sweeps the lyre,  
“ And she that glories in th' unerring bow.”†

---

\* Delos, the island upon which Diana was born.

† Diana is represented with a bow and quiver, full of arrows ; she has also with her dogs, to assist her in her hunting expeditions. When represented in her chariot she is drawn by white stags. She is some-



" From the rocky ridges steep,  
 " At whose foot the hush'd waves sleep,  
 " Left their far famed native shore  
 " Them th' exulting mother\* bore  
 " To Parnassus, on whose height  
 " Bacchus shouting holds his rites ;†  
 " Glitt'ring in the burnish'd shade,  
 " By the laurel's branches made,  
 " Where th' enormous dragon lies,  
 " Brass his scales, and flame his eyes,  
 " Earth-born monster, that around  
 " Rolling guards th' oracular ground :  
 " Him‡ while yet a sportive child  
 " In his mother's arms that smil'd,  
 " Phœbus slew, and seiz'd the shrine§  
 " Whence proceeds the voice divine ;  
 " On the golden tripod plac'd,  
 " Throne by falsehood ne'er disgrac'd,  
 " Where Castalia's|| pure stream flows,  
 " He the fates to mortals shows.¶

times represented with wings. When in this character her chariot is drawn by two heifers ; and she has in one hand a lion, in the other a panther. Sometimes her chariot is drawn by two horses, but always of different colours. She has buskins on her feet, and always delineated a very robust figure, strong limbs, and taller than other female characters.

\* Latona.

† A festival to Bacchus was held here.

‡ This pertains to the Apollo generally alluded to, son of Jupiter and Latona ; he is sometimes represented as a child destroying the serpent Python, which was sent by Juno to torment his mother Latona ; at other times, a tall but youthful-looking man, of a well-formed figure, but without beard ; his hair is long, and he has round his head rays of light, and mostly represented with either a bow or lyre in his hand.

§ Delphi.

|| This was a fountain at the foot of Parnassus ; the waters from which inspired those who drank them with the art of poetry ; and in this fountain the Pythian priestesses always bathed before they seated themselves upon the tripod.

¶ Apollo was empowered by Jupiter to foretell events.

" But when Themis,\* whom of yore  
 " Earth,† her fruitfull mother, bore,  
 " From her hallow'd seat he drove,  
 " Earth t' avenge her daughter strove,  
 " Forming visions of the night,  
 " Which, in rapt dreams hov'ring light,  
 " All that Time's dark volumes hold  
 " Might to mortal sense unfold,  
 " When in midnight's sable shades  
 " Sleep the silent couch invades‡ :  
 " Thus did Earth her vengeance boast.  
 " His prophetic honours lost,  
 " Royal Phœbus§ speeds his flight  
 " To Olympus, on whose height  
 " At the throne of Jove he stands,  
 " Stretching forth his little hands,  
 " Suppliant that the Pythian§ shrine  
 " Feel no more the wrath divine ;  
 " That the goddess he appease  
 " That her nightly visions cease.  
 " Jove with smiles beheld his son  
 " Early thus address his throne,  
 " Suing with ambitious pride  
 " O'er the rich shrine to preside :

---

\* Themis was the daughter of Cœlus and Terra, and supposed to have been the first goddess to whom temples were raised. When represented upon canvas she has a sword in one hand and a pair of scales in the other, and is often attended by four female figures representing the seasons. The meaning is that justice should be done at all times—I would to God it were so.

† Terra.

‡ Terra was supposed to have been the mother of Grief, Oblivion, and Mourning. The allegory is quite clear. The earth produces these sorrows ; or rather they occur to mortals upon the earth.

§ At the temple of Delphi the priestess, when delivering the oracle, was seated upon a three-legged stool, which was made of gold, and called a tripod. She was made to inhale a vapour, which had the effect of exciting her to a variety of extravagant expressions ; these being written down by the priest, and interpreted by him to those who consulted the oracle, were, of course, so construed as to answer the ends of the craft he was a member of ; hence it was that the authorities at the Temple of Delphi became so opulent.

"He assenting bow'd his head.  
 "Strait the nightly visions fled ;  
 "And prophetic dreams no more  
 "Hover'd slumb'ring mortals o'er :  
 "Now to Phoebus giv'n again  
 "All his honours pure remain ;  
 "Votaries distant regions send  
 "His frequented throne t' attend,  
 "And the firm decrees of fate  
 "On his faithfull voice await."

After the Chorus have finished this hymn, a messenger enters and asks them where is the king, for, says he, the priestess has gone on board a vessel with the strangers, and they are making their way to sea ; the Chorus, faithful to the promise they made to Iphigenia, affect surprise, and seem not to credit the messenger's tale, they tell him that the monarch left the temple in haste, so that he had better go seek him, for they can tell him no more ; to which he replies—

"See, what a faithless race you women are !  
 "In all that hath been done you have a part.

"CHORUS.

"Sure thou art mad : what with the strangers' flight  
 "Have we to do ? But wilt thou not with all  
 "The speed thou may'st go to the monarch's house ? "

Their aim is to give the fugitives more time to escape ; for this purpose, seeing the messenger bent upon carrying his information to the monarch, they tell him to seek the king at his house, trying to disguise the fact of his being within the temple ; but our indefatigable messenger will not have it so, and he says—

"Not till I first am well inform'd if here  
 "Within the temple be the king, or not.  
 "Unbar the gates : to you within I speak :

"And tell your lord that at the portal here  
"I stand, and bring him tidings of fresh ills."

Hereupon the inner gates are thrown open, and Thoas advances through them.

"THOAS.

"Who at the temple of the goddess dares  
"This clamour raise, and thund'ring at the gate  
"Strikes terror through the ample space within?"

These women, says the messenger, tried to deceive me, as they are deceiving you, but of them I speak hereafter; my business is more urgent now and is important to thee. The priestess is flying from this land with the strangers, and she is carrying the sacred image with her, the ablutions she talked of were but false pretences to save her brother Orestes, for one of the victims is he.

"When to the shore we came, where station'd\* rode  
"The galley of Orestes by the rocks  
"Conceal'd, to us, whom thou hadst sent with her  
"To hold the strangers' chains, the royal maid  
"Made signs that we retire, and stand aloof,  
"As if with secret rites she would perform  
"The purpos'd expiation: on she went,  
"In her own hands holding the strangers' chains  
"Behind them: not without suspicion this,  
"Yet by thy servants, king, allow'd. At length,  
"That we might deem her in some purpose high  
"Employ'd, she rais'd her voice, and chaunted loud  
"Barbaric strains, as if with mystic rites  
"She cleans'd the stain of blood. When we had sate  
"A tedious while, it came into our thought  
"That from their chains unloos'd the stranger youths  
"Might kill her, and escape by flight: yet fear  
"Of seeing what we ought not kept us still

---

\* Anchored.

“ In silence ; but at length we all resolv’d  
“ To go, though not permitted, where they were.  
“ There we beheld the Grecian bark with oars  
“ Well-furnish’d, wing’d for flight ; and at their seats  
“ Grasping their oars were fifty rowers ; free  
“ From chains beside the stern the two youths stood.  
“ Some from the prow reliev’d the keel with poles ;  
“ Some weigh’d the anchors up ; the climbing ropes  
“ Some hasten’d, through their hands the cables drew,  
“ Launch’d the light bark, and gave her to the main.  
“ But when we saw their treacherous wiles, we rush’d  
“ Heedless of danger, seiz’d the priestess, seiz’d  
“ The haulsers, hung upon the helm, and strove  
“ To rend the rudder-bands away. Debate  
“ Now rose : what mean you, sailing o’er the seas,  
“ The statue and the priestess from the land  
“ By stealth conveying ? Whence art thou, and who,  
“ That bear’st her, like a purchas’d slave, away ?  
“ He said, I am her brother, be of this  
“ Informed, Orestes, son of Agamemnon ;  
“ My sister, so long lost, I bear away,  
“ Recover’d here. But nought the less for that  
“ Held we the priestess, and by force would lead  
“ Again to thee : hence dreadfull on our cheeks  
“ The blows ; for in their hands no sword they held,  
“ Nor we ; but many a rattling stroke the youths  
“ Dealt with their fists ; against our sides and breasts  
“ Their arms fierce darting, till our batter’d limbs  
“ Were all disabled ; now with dreadfull marks  
“ Disfigur’d up the precipice we fly,  
“ Some bearing on their heads, some in their eyes  
“ The bloody bruises : standing on the heights  
“ Our fight was safer, and we hurl’d at them  
“ Fragments of rocks ; but standing on the stern  
“ The archers with their arrows drove us thence,  
“ And now a swelling wave roll’d in, which drove  
“ The galley tow’rds the land ; the sailors fear’d  
“ The sudden swell ; on his left arm sustain’d  
“ Orestes bore his sister through the tide,  
“ Mounted the bark’s tall side, and on the deck  
“ Safe plac’d her, and Diana’s holy image  
“ Which fell from heav’n : from the mid-ship his voice

"He sent aloud, Ye youths, that in this bark  
 "From Argos plough'd the deep, now ply your oars,  
 "And dash the billows till they foam : those things\*  
 "Are ours, for which we sweep the Euxine† sea,  
 "And steer'd our course within its clashing rocks.  
 "They gave a cheerfull shout, and with their oars  
 "Dash'd the salt wave. The galley, whilst it rode  
 "Within the harbour, work'd its easy way :  
 "But having pass'd its mouth, the swelling flood  
 "Roll'd on it, and with sudden force the wind  
 "Impetuous rising drove it back : their oars  
 "They slack'd not, stoutly struggling 'gainst the wave :  
 "But tow'rds the land the reflux flood impell'd  
 "The galley : then the royal virgin stood,  
 "And pray'd, O daughter of Latona, save me,  
 "Thy priestess save ; from this barbaric land  
 "To Greece restore me, and forgive my thefts :  
 "For thou, O goddess, dost thy brother love,  
 "Deem then that I love those allied to me.  
 "The mariners responsive to her pray'r  
 "Shouted loud Pæans, and their naked arms,  
 "Each chearing each, to their stout oars apply.  
 "But nearer, and yet nearer to the rock  
 "The galley drove ; some rush'd into the sea,  
 "Some strain'd the ropes that bind the loosen'd sails.  
 "Strait was I hither sent to thee ; O king,  
 "T' inform thee of these accidents. But haste,  
 "Take chains and gyves with thee ; for if the flood  
 "Subside not to a calm, there is no hope  
 "Of safety to the strangers. Be assur'd  
 "That Neptune, awfull monarch of the main,  
 "Remembers Troy, and, hostile to the race  
 "Of Pelops, will deliver to thy hands,  
 "And to thy people, as is meet, the son

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\* The "things" here spoken of by the messenger as having been alluded to by Orestes, applies to the priestess Iphigenia and the statue of the goddess Diana, which he and Pylades are bearing away.

† The Euxine sea divides Asia and Europe, and is bounded on the west by Colchis. Herodotus has stated that this sea is nearly 1,400 miles in length, and over 400 miles in breadth. It is called the Black Sea on account of the dense fogs that frequently hover over it.



“Of Agamemnon ; and bring back to thee  
 “His sister, who the goddess hath betray’d,  
 “Unmindfull of the blood at Aulis shed.\*

“THOAS.

“Inhabitants of this barbaric land,  
 “Will you not rein your steeds, will you not fly  
 “Along the shore, to seize whate’er this skiff  
 “Of Greece casts forth, and for your goddess rous’d†  
 “Hunt down these impious men ? Will you not launch  
 “Instant your swift-oar’d barks, by sea, by land  
 “To catch them, from the rugged rock to hurl  
 “Their bodies, or impale them on the stake ?  
 “But for your women, in these dark designs  
 “Accomplices, hereafter, as I find  
 “Convenient leasure, I will punish you.  
 “Th’ occasion urges now, and gives no pause”

After this outburst of passion on the part of Thoas, he is inducing his people to pursue the vessel, when Minerva appears and tells him to stay his “vengeful chase.” Attend to me, says she, it is Minerva speaks to thee ; pursue not Orestes, for it was by Phœbus’ command he came hither to convey his sister to her native country,

“And to my land‡ the sacred image bear.”

We have now but one more drama upon this subject by Euripides to go through, which is entitled “Andromache.” Previous to going into this, I propose to make

\* This is meant as an accusation against Iphigenia’s fidelity ; for (says the messenger), although she willingly submitted herself as a sacrifice to the shrine of Diana, she is now treacherous to her trust.

† This is an assumption on the part of Thoas, to excite his people in making them believe that the goddess herself is roused or incensed at the desecration of her shrine.

‡ Minerva was the patroness goddess of Athens.

a few remarks upon the general character of our poet, as noticed by the scholar, Schlegel ; after doing so, I will take the tragedy of "Andromache," and proceed with the same characters as treated upon by Æschylus in his dramas of "Agamemnon," the "Choephoræ" and the "Furies," then with Sophocles, "Ajax," "Philoctetes" and "Electra," all of these upon the same subject.

## LECTURE XXIV.

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Before commencing the next tragedy, I am rather anxious to say a few words respecting our poet (Euripides), not that I am going to make comparisons between him and Sophocles, or between him and Æschylus, but simply to explain why I think, he has by some, been more severely censured than he deserves, and further, because it gives me an opportunity of replying to a remark which has been made by my friend, J. G. Caley, Esq.\* This gentleman, a short time since, said to me in a jocular manner, I suppose you have taken "Schlegel" as your model, my reply was, that I had never read Schlegel's works, so I could not have taken him as a guidance at all. I then mentioned the circumstance to another friend, Desmond Ryan, Esq.,† who immediately replied, that if I had not read Schlegel's works I ought to do so, for I might gain some good notions from them. In consequence of this remark, I have read the work in question, and I am free to admit that it is a most elaborate compilation, full of good sound and classical information, yet not free from

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\* A Cambridge scholar, gained the Chancellor's gold medal for his poem, "The Death of Baldur," from the Scandinavian mythology.

† A man of sound classical learning, liberal mind, and generous heart.

prejudices, and after remarking that, I am also pleased to have the opportunity of expressing my esteem and admiration of both Caley and Ryan's classical talents, I will proceed to a few remarks of Schlegel's respecting Euripides, to which I will reply according to my humble thinking. Schlegel says, that Euripides "wanted the lofty earnestness of purpose." The earnestness of purpose I think Euripides had in view, was that which I have several times pointed out; his faith was shaken in the system of idolatry extant, and he desired to convey this to the people, which he did without so far shocking their belief as to place his own life in jeopardy. Schlegel admits that Euripides had attended the schools of the philosophers, and that he had been a scholar of Anaxagoras, which induced him to "indulge in philosophical doctrines, on all occasions," and he adds, that Euripides did this "in a very imperfect manner." Now, I think, taking into consideration the risk he ran in advancing such doctrines at all, he did all he could for sake of the great truth of the existence of one divine power, and if he is somewhat enigmatical, we ought freely to admit the dangerous task he had imposed upon himself, and bear with him in his vague allusions. Schlegel says, "his constant aim is to please, he cares not by what means." I think this is an uncharitable remark, and is not correct, for Euripides, I firmly believe, had a greater aim in view. Schlegel admits, that "while he is shaking the groundwork of religion, he at the same time acts the moralist." Were Schlegel a worshiper of idols, I could understand this remark being made to Euripides' detriment, but we, at least, who have thrown these absurdities aside, have our justification in differing with Schlegel, and in applauding our

poet for his laudable intention, considering what the religion was which he was sceptical upon. I begin to fear that great scholars have their prejudices as well as other people. I think the Athenian critic, who was so shocked at my satirizing the story of the "Danaides," must have referred to Schlegel, to discover an excuse to find fault with my belief respecting the actual existence of these divine gods and goddesses; for I think we shall discover, by studying the mythology, that these very murderesses received absolution from the gods, and were themselves idolized. Schlegel is tenacious lest he should be thought at variance with himself respecting Euripides, for he is particular in remarking, that when he endeavored to show the superiority of a play of Euripides to Racine's imitation of it, he only alluded to a single drama. This explanation is perfectly just, but I cannot say quite so much for the following discrepant qualifications. He admits that Euripides deserves "an extraordinary mede of praise," but that "we are forced to censure him severely;" then he qualifies these remarks by saying, that "of few writers can so much good and evil be said with truth." I am free to admit that Euripides is not without faults, what man ever was? but I am certainly slow to see the "evil" he has committed. Then, says Schlegel, "he was a man of boundless ingenuity, and most versatile talents," and that "he certainly had splendid and amiable qualities." "It is his constant aim to please, he cares not by what means." These are surely not "splendid" nor "amiable qualities;" and Schlegel adds, that his "constant aim to please," made him "so unequal." I might paraphrase more of these remarks, but I prefer to proceed, and prove that the greatest

of men are not infallible, in fact they are frequently greatly in error; and Schlegel's error regarding Euripides is, that he is lavish of his encomiums, and equally prolific in his condemnations. I think a critic ought not to indulge in such broad assertions either one way or other, without pointing out good reasons, drawing fair inferences, and leaving third parties to judge for themselves; it is unhappily too much the case, that some men who have a little reputation for learning, when they get the power into their hands of mauling other people's productions, forget their own deficiencies, and often find fault just to make somebody else think they are themselves very clever. If the public could only be behind the curtain and observe how these things are frequently managed, they would see the frailty of human nature in one of its very worst forms, for critics are like other men, a good many of them presume (because they know a little) to set themselves up as oracles, and glance over a book merely to pick out seeming freckles, whilst very often they do not even trouble themselves to investigate the contexts. I would ask a few of these solemn bipeds, if they have not sometimes read a book after they have condemned it, and discovered that they had been entirely in error, and that they had been abusing their superiors, without a shadow of cause. I can vouch for this fact, for in my own case two careless fellows snubbed the first issue of my efforts, upon which I had the temerity to write to them, and point out the errors were theirs, not mine; this brought them to read the subsequent issues of my work, instead of glancing at them, and the result has proven more honorable to themselves and gratifying to me, for they have con-



tinued from time to time to praise my efforts, more and more, perhaps more than I deserve. Now, again, to the scholar Schlegel, he says that Euripides "has passages of overpowering beauty," but that he "sinks into mediocrity." I should like to find the work which is uniformly "beautiful," without sinking occasionally into "mediocrity." Then, says Schlegel, "with all his faults he possesses an admirable ease, and a certain insinuating charm." For my part I think these acknowledgements of Euripides' transcendent talents, on the part of Schlegel, demands from him full and distinct reasons why he also finds fault with our poet; he ought to assign good cause for doing so, particularly as his complaints are as frequent as are his praises. Save me from my friends, say I, when they blow hot and cold with one breath. I can understand an author being praised, qualified by a general remark or two respecting errors, or by a writer being condemned with a certain degree of credit being given him; but I cannot hold with a criticism which goes on from beginning to end, alternately praising and scolding. When I see this I begin to suspect it is a show of temper in the critic himself, and that his mind is upon the constant change, like an infant with its toys. Then, says Schlegel, "we have, besides, a particular reason for censuring without reserve the errors of this poet; the fact, namely, that our stage is infected with the same faults with those which procured for Euripides so much favor." This is criticism with a vengeance; he makes no allowance for the difference of the period, nearly 2,400 years intervening, and taking into consideration that the Attic critics were a most refined and severe class of men, if these praised Euripides

almost universally, I think it goes a great way to prove that us moderns are not the most qualified to form opinions so nicely as were the ancients themselves, of the merits or demerits of such an author as Euripides; we know very well that it is a difficult task to translate the Greek into English, and that the most profound scholars differ in their rendering of the language; for this we cannot have a greater proof than in Herbert's exposition of *Æschylus's*, "*Prometheus Chained*," which he has transformed into a sort of extravaganza, and the "*Agamemnon*" of the same author into a burlesque. If Herbert had admitted that these were his aims, I would most readily have applauded him for his abilities, for he is not without talent, but as he professes also to be a critic, he deserves even less praise than Schlegel for the manner in which their respective tasks are performed. I must now leave this subject for the present, and introduce to your notice the Tragedy of "*Andromache*," as I must not dwell too long upon one subject for fear of disappointing you; but I will return to Schlegel's subject by-and-by.

Andromache was wife to Hector, son of Priam, after his death before Troy. She was taken by Neoptolemus and treated as his wife, by whom she had three sons. In the tragedy I am about relating to you, it is stated, by Euripides, that Neoptolemus married Hermione, the daughter of Menelaus, and that these latter two conspired to destroy Andromache, in Neoptolemus's absence, but that she was saved by his grandfather, Peleus, who took her under his protection. She was the daughter of Eetion,\* king of Thebes. The death of

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\* According to tradition Achilles killed Eetion, Andromache's father, as well as her husband, Hector.

her son Astyanax, by Hector, has been attributed to Neoptolemus, who afterwards possessed her and treated her as his queen, until he married Hermione. But it should not be omitted by me to tell you that Euripides distinctly makes this murder the act of Menelaus. Others again give Ulysses credit for the horrid deed, and say that he threw him from the battlements of Troy to the earth beneath, before his mother's eyes. The other characters represented in this piece, besides Andromache, are Hermione, Menelaus, Molossus, Peleus, Orestes, Thetis, some female attendants, a Messenger, and the Chorus composed of virgins from the town Phthia, situate in Phthiotis, in Thessaly. Molossus was a son of Neoptolemus and Andromache; he became king of Epirus after the death of Helenus, son of Priam, whom Neoptolemus had placed upon the throne out of gratitude for having saved his life after the fall of Troy. We are told also that he gave to him Andromache, after he himself had had three sons by her, and that Helenus became the father of Cestrinus by Andromache.

Peleus was a grandson of Jupiter; his parents were Æcus and Endies. I have partly explained his history previously to this, but not entirely so. He was first married to Antigone, a daughter of Ceyx,\* King of

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\* Ceyx was a son of Lucifer, whose parents were Jupiter and Aurora—she, the daughter of Hyperion and Thea; some describe her as the offspring of Titan and Terra; then, again, Pallas has been called her father. It is upon this character that Shakspeare constructed the following line in his tragedy of "Othello:"—

"The bawdy wind, that kisses all it meets,"

for Aurora was mother of the winds, and her amours are described as being so numerous that she had children by the following gods:—Cephalus, Orion, and Tithonus; whilst her husband's name was

Trachinia. Her mother's name was Alcyone. After which he was wedded in immense splendour on Mount Pelion, to the goddess Thetis, who attended upon him with great care throughout life, and ultimately had him made immortal. Their only offspring who lived to maturity was Achilles, who was slain before Troy. This character I have also fully described. Now, ere I proceed with this play, permit me to qualify my former remarks respecting Menelaus, for I have to some extent (although not appreciating the character) stood his champion. My meaning in this respect was simply in a worldly sense. I must now bring him to your notice more culpably, for in this tragedy he acts most basely towards the afflicted Andromache, for which there is no palliation. The character of Hermione is here also represented in a most vindictive spirit, for she first loses the affections of her husband, Neoptolemus, by her disobedience, then lays the blame upon Andromache, who, in fact, has the greater cause to be jealous of the two, as she has borne Neoptolemus a son, and sat on his throne as his queen. Menelaus offers to assist his daughter to slay Andromache, and when they are foiled by the interference of Peleus, he declares vengeance, but is frustrated in his designs. Potter says that Euripides has violated the unity of

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Astræus. The chariot in which she rides should be painted rose-colour, and represented drawn by white horses. She should be represented as a veiled figure driving with one hand, whilst with the other she is pointing to the east, where the sun is seen to rise, Ceyx and Alcyone we are told were both changed into birds. Aurora and Venus are sometimes confounded (the latter is also known by the name of Lucifer), this is when she appears before the sun, in similar manner as Aurora does. Lucifer and Pluto are sometimes confounded, but they are different characters.

time in this drama by making Orestes menace the life of Neoptolemus, and immediately after introducing a messenger with the news of that prince's death, which has taken place at Phthia. This we shall see as we go on. I will explain the part he alludes to more fully when I come to it. Potter lays the scene of the play at the temple of Thetis adjoining the palace of Neoptolemus, which was situate near to Phthia. Yet he infers that the distance was so great that not sufficient time is allowed between Orestes' quitting the stage and the news of Neoptolemus's death being brought in. The play commences by Andromache relating her misfortunes as follows:—From thy graceful towers, O! Thebes I went in pomp and gorgeous array to Troy, and there at the royal house of Priam was given in marriage to his son Hector. Then was I blest—ah! supremely blest; but now I am more wretched than any woman on earth, for I have been eye-witness to the death of my dear husband, Hector, by the hand of Achilles; and my darling son, Astyanax, I have seen hurled headlong from the towers of Troy. I, who was a free-born woman, nursed in the lap of plenty, am now the slave of Neoptolemus, a mere island lord. In Phthiotis am I resident. In this land the goddess Thetis, with her husband Peleus, dwelt in a retired habitation, and the place in Thetis's honour is, by the Thessalians, called Thetidæum. Neoptolemus, though heir to the kingdom of Thessaly, is content to preside over the province of Phthiotis, leaving his grandfather, Peleus, to govern the kingdom. I am now the mother of a son by this Neoptolemus, having been forced to his embraces by compulsion. I had hoped, through this circumstance, that my child would have been the



means of protecting me against further affliction, and proved a source of comfort; but since Neoptolemus has wedded his Spartan bride, Hermione, I am put aside and made by her subject to the most cruel oppression. She accuses me of putting a spell upon her to render her childless, so to charm her husband's love from her, that I may myself become the mistress of his house and hold control over it instead of her. She is jealous, and fancies I desire to deprive her of those rights she is entitled to. But, heaven be my witness, this is no design on my part, for I have not willingly shared Neoptolemus's bed. I urge this as a proof, but all is lost upon her, for she will not believe me, and she resolves to kill me. In this her father, Menelaus, joins, and has arrived from Sparta to complete my destruction. I now, through fear, have left the house, and am seated here at the shrine of Thetis seeking her protection. My child I have, by stealth, sent away, so that he may not also become a victim, for his father is not here to protect him. A female attendant now enters and cautions Andromache of Menelaus's designs, and tells her that it is discovered where her child is, and that Menelaus has gone to seize it, to which Andromache exclaims—

“Then I am lost indeed. Thee, O my child,  
“Will these two vultures seize and kill: whilst he,  
“Who gave thee birth, at Delphi lingers yet.”

Alas! I have sent often to Neoptolemus's grandfather, old Peleus, to inform him of this event, but he does not come. Is he not yet made acquainted with the facts? Wilt thou not go to him? Thou art a woman



and can easily devise\* an excuse for thy absence. The thing is dangerous, says the attendant, for Hermione is on the watch,—but I will go.

“ANDROMACHE.

“Go then, this instant go ; and I will vent  
 “To yon æthereal skies my griefs, my plaints,  
 “My tears : for women are by nature form’d  
 “To feel some consolation, when their tongue  
 “Gives utterance to th’ afflictions they endure.  
 “Mine is no single grief, my sorrows flow  
 “From various sources : my paternal realm,  
 “My slaughter’d Hector, and my ruthless fate,  
 “Which bows me to the yoke of servitude,  
 “Unworthy fall, I mourn. No mortal man†  
 “May therefore be call’d happy, till you see  
 “The last of all his days, and how, that pass’d,  
 “He to the realms of Pluto shall descend.”

After these lines Andromache recites the various ills that have befallen her and her family, upon which the Chorus enter and cautions her of her danger. Immediately after this Hermione enters, who, in an arrogant and imperious tone, speaks of her rich attire and jewels, saying, She received them from her father as a dowry, which gives her right to speak ; therefore I address myself to thee.

“Woman, wou’dst thou, a slave, beneath the spear‡  
 “A captive, keep possession of this house,

\* This is a strong hint on the part of Euripides, attributing duplicity to women generally.

† I cannot see the consistency of Andromache’s using the term *mortal man*. Why not (she being a female) say mortal woman. The proper sense to put upon the passage is, “No mortal with griefs like mine can possibly be happy until released by death.”

‡ The spoils of war.

" And drive me out ? I through thy baleful spells  
 " Am hated by my husband, for my bed  
 " Is childless : dreadfull potency the dames  
 " Of Asia boast in charms like these :\* but thee  
 " I will from such restrain ;† for nought this house  
 " Of sea-born Thetis shall avail thee, nought  
 " Her altar, or her shrine ; for thou shalt die.  
 " But should some god or mortal save thy life,  
 " Thou shalt be humbled for thy former pride,  
 " And made to tremble, crouching at my knee,  
 " To sweep my house, to sprinkle crystal dews  
 " From golden vases, and to know where now  
 " Thow art : nor Hector here, nor Priam reigns,  
 " Nor is this Chryse,‡ but a Grecian town.  
 " Thou wretch, so void of feeling is thy mind,  
 " That thou hast dar'd to share the bed of him  
 " Whose father slew thy husband, and to bear  
 " Children to him that from his murderer sprung.  
 " But such are all the rude barbarian race ;  
 " Father with daughter, son with mother weds,  
 " Brother with sister ; and the dearest friends§  
 " Rush on through mutual slaughter ; || no restraint  
 " Of law they know : these customs teach not here.¶  
 " For that one man should of two wives be lord  
 " Honour allows not : but one nuptial bed  
 " Enjoying, let them fondly cherish that,  
 " Whoe'er without disquiet wish to dwell."

In reply to this outburst of passion and intemperate

\* The women of Asia generally prognosticate fearful consequences to women who are so bewitched as I am.

† I will restrain you from continuing your spells upon me.

‡ Chryse alludes to the town of Lyrnessus in Cilicia, which was governed by Eetion, his wife's name was Chryseis, otherwise Astynome ; her name of Chryseis she bore from her father's Chryses ; and the town of Lyrnessus, which her husband governed, was named after her Chryse.

§ The nearest relatives.

|| Mutually degenerating their own blood.

¶ You shall not be instrumental in establishing such a custom in this country ; at all events not under the same roof with me.

speech, Andromache endeavours to reason with Hermione. Is it, says she, that the Phrygians rule here instead of the Spartans? Am I free, or am I raised by fortune to eminence? Am I yet youthful like yourself? Are my friends so numerous here in this strange country that I should wish to displace thee from thy position? What would it avail me even if I had the power, would my becoming a mother of more children in my present position be a gratification? Surely not, for they would only be slaves like myself. It may be that your country's people respect me because, when I was in Troy, for my husband, Hector's, sake, I lived in obscurity, preferring a domestic life to living in state. I have placed no spell upon thee, it is your own demeanour, devoid of sweet converse to your husband, which drives him from you, it is through your waywardness that your husband hates you.

"Hadst thou in Thrace, met with perpetual snow,  
 "Some tyrant for thy husband, where one man  
 "With many wives shares his connubial bed,  
 "Say wou'dst thou kill them? So thou wou'dst be found  
 "Unsated appetite in all thy sex  
 "Encouraging :\* how shamefull this ! We feel  
 "This passion not less strong, perhaps, than men,  
 "But check it with the curb of modesty.  
 "O my lov'd Hector, I for thy dear sake  
 "Let my affection go with thine, if e'er  
 "Venus deceiv'd thee ; and to sons so born  
 "Oft gave this breast, that nought unkind from me  
 "Might wound thy peace : and thus my husband's love  
 "I by my gentle virtue won. But thou  
 "Wilt not allow, through jealous fear, one drop

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\* Were you in Thrace, and one of several wives to one man, and were you to kill his other wives, you would be condemned as a wanton, encouraging an unsated appetite for the other sex.

"Of love's æthereal dew to light upon  
 "Thy husband. Seek not, lady, to surpass  
 "In love of man thy mother.\* It behoves  
 "Children, if wise, such manners to avoid  
 "As their bad mothers mark'd with infamy."

After Andromache has finished this speech, the Chorus interpose, advising her not to continue the contention. Hermione endeavours to draw Andromache from the Temple, so that she may avoid polluting it with blood, and Andromache as resolutely determines to remain until Neoptolemus returns. Hermione threatens to fire the place, to gash her with wounds, for she is resolved not to wait until her husband's arrival. Well, says Andromache,

"Kill me, pollute the altar with my blood ;  
 "The goddess will avenge the impious deed."

Finding Andromache resolved not to move from her seat at the altar, Hermione exclaims that she is in possession of a charm which, if even Andromache were fixed where she is in molten lead, she'd remove her, and now she leaves the stage as may be supposed to arm herself with her charm,† but this depends on the assistance of her father Menelaus, who, after the Chorus has gone through the following verses, enters with Molossus.

"CHORUS.

"STROPHE 1ST.

"What mis'ries from that fatal day

\* Helena.

† Hermione here conceives the notion of getting Menelaus to produce Molossus, the child of Andromache, and threaten to kill him before her face, unless she removes from the altar—this is what she means by the *charm*.

"Arose, when to th' Idean grove  
 The son of Maia\* and of Jove,  
 "Their cares attending on the way,  
 "Guided the rivals of the skies?  
 "The cars roll'd on their splendid state,  
 "But with them Discord gend'ring hate,  
 "And contest fierce for beauty's prize :  
 "Onward they roll'd in evil hour,  
 "And reach'd the shepherd's lonely bow'r,  
 "Where, 'midst his flocks that graz'd around,  
 "The solitary youth they found.

"ANTISTROPHE 1ST.

"Soon as they reach'd the shady grove,  
 "Undress'd their shining limbs they lave  
 "Amid'st the cool translucent wave,  
 "Which tumbles from the heights above ;  
 "Then to the son of Priam came,  
 "And each, to gain the envied prize,  
 "Her pow'r displaying proudly vies  
 "With offer'd gifts† his soul t' inflame.  
 "But Venus, vers'd in winning wiles,  
 "With words, that please, the youth beguiles ;  
 "But fraught with mischief, war, and fate,  
 "Destructive to the Trojan state.

"STROPHE 2ND.

"Oh had his mother, on the fatal day  
 "When Paris first she gave to light,  
 "Cast the pernicious ill away‡  
 "E'er he had fix'd his bow'r on Ida's height!

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\* Mercurius or Mercury, who guided the goddesses Juno, Venus, and Minerva to Mount Ida, in Troas, where Paris was as a shepherd, for him to decide which of the three goddesses possessed the most beautiful form ; he (as is well known) adjudged the prize to Venus.

† This should be *gift*, and alludes to the promise which Venus made him that he should possess the most beautiful woman upon earth if he awarded her (Venus) the prize.

‡ It was foretold at Paris's birth that he would be the cause of the destruction of his country ; this arose from his mother Hecuba having dreamt before she had him that she was pregnant with a flaming torch.

" When from the laurel's hallow'd shade  
 " Aloud Cassandra cried, 'Destroy,  
 " 'This fatal pest of Priam and of Troy.'\*  
 " Was there of those, whose hoary age  
 " Render'd their rev'rend counsels sage,  
 " To whom with ardour the prophetic maid  
 " Did not her warning pray'rs apply,  
 " 'Let this ill-omen'd infant die!'"

" ANTISTROPHE 2.

" The Trojan dames† then slav'ry had not bound  
 " Condemn'd to drag her galling chain;  
 " Nor thou‡ on Phthia's hostile ground  
 " By thy proud lords§ been taught to taste of pain.  
 " Then had she freed the Grecian pow'rs  
 " From all the painfull toils of war,  
 " Which fir'd with vengeance, from their country far,  
 " Our youth, inur'd to hardships, bore  
 " In arms on Troy's ensanguin'd shore,  
 " And fought ten tedious years around her tow'rs:  
 " No tear had dew'd the widow's bed,  
 " No father mourn'd his children dead."

Menelaus, now addressing Andromache, tells her that her placing her son by stealth in another house, has not succeeded in keeping him out of his power, for he has him, and unless she moves from the altar where she is, he will put her child to death before her eyes. One of you shall die at least; shall it be yourself, or is he to perish. Andromache replies to Menelaus, censuring him for arrogance and presumption, insinuating

\* Cassandra was endowed with the power of foretelling events, and when her brother Paris was born (though herself but a child) she called out in her sleep, "Destroy this fatal pest of Priam and of Troy."

† This should be *dame*, and alludes to Hecuba.

‡ Andromache.

§ This should be *lord* and alludes to Neoptolemus.



his want of courage in battle, and accusing him of cowardice in attacking a defenceless woman and her child. Think you, says she, that if I am assassinated by you and your daughter, the stain of murder will not light upon your heads? And if I save myself by permitting you to destroy Neoptolemus's offspring, do you imagine his father will tamely brook his death? No, no, the son of Achilles is not to be deemed so unmanly. Do you carry out your threats, and as assuredly as your daughter lives will she be driven from his house; then what husband can you get to take her? will you be able to recommend her as a mild or modest woman, flown from the oppression of a bad husband, or will you keep her in your own house until grown grey, for no one will wed her, as your statement will not be believed, it being untrue. If I have been guilty of any unfair practices against your daughter, as she asserts, let me be judged fairly by him by whom both she and I have right to be judged; in him I have confidence that he will act justly, but your fidelity I doubt. A man like you for sake of a bad woman,\* who would destroy a country, is not to be relied upon. I hear your remarks, says Menelaus, by which I am totally unmoved; one thing I am bent upon, which is, to maintain and support my daughter in her dignity as the mistress of Neoptolemus's house; therefore delay not, either you or this child dies. Thus he is menacing Molossus's life, whilst Andromache exclaims :—

“Dreadfull alternative! A cruel choice

“Hast thou allow'd; unhappy, if I choose;

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\* Helen.

"Not choosing, wretched :\* dreadfull this ! O thou,  
 "In mighty vengeance for slight cause severe,  
 "Hear me : Why dost thou kill me ? for what crime ?  
 "What town have I betray'd ? what child of thine  
 "Have I made bleed ? what house have I with flames  
 "Destroy'd ? A captive, to his bed my lord  
 "Led me by force : yet him thou wilt not slay  
 "Who wrought th' offence, but me ; and from the cause  
 "Unjustly turn thy fury on th' event.  
 "Wretch that I am, what miseries weigh me down !  
 "O my unhappy country ! What dire ills  
 "I suffer ! What behov'd it me again  
 "To be a mother, but with double grief  
 "To load this grief ? What joy hath life for me ?  
 "On which should I reflect, my present state,  
 "Or my past fortunes ? Hector I have seen  
 "Slaughter'd, and dragg'd bound to the rolling car,  
 "And Ilium blazing, piteous sight ! in flames.  
 "I to the Grecian fleet was borne a slave,  
 "Dragg'd by the hair ; and when I reach'd the shore  
 "Of Phthia, was compelled to wed† his son  
 "Who slew my Hector. But my former woes  
 "Why wail, nor rather turn my mournfull thoughts,  
 "And scan my present ills ? I had one son  
 "Yet left, a beam of light to cheer my life ;  
 "Him they will kill who joy in things like these :  
 "But for the sake of my unhappy life  
 "He shall not die ; for there is hope in him,  
 "If he shall be preserv'd ; and not to give  
 "My life to save my son's in me were base.  
 "Behold I quit the altar, to your hands,  
 "To murder, stab, bind, strangle me, resign'd.  
 "Thy mother, O my son, that she may save  
 "Thy life, descends to Pluto's dreary realms.

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\* If I choose one of your alternatives, and let my child die, it will render me unhappy ; if, on the other hand, I give myself up I become most wretched.

† Her connection with Neoptolemus she deems the same as a marriage ; although, in fact, she was merely his mistress, he being, by the laws of his country, precluded from marrying a barbarian.

"If thou escape from death, remember me,  
"Thy mother ; what I suffer'd, how I died  
"Remember : to thy father when thou goest,  
"Midst thy caresses let thy warm tears flow,  
"Hang on his knees, and tell him all my wrongs :  
"For children are to all men life it self.  
"If he, who knows not what a parent feels,  
"Denies this,\* he hath less of anxious care,  
"But 'midst his bliss the soul's best pleasures wants."

Andromache descends from the altar, immediately upon which Menelaus exclaims to his followers, "Seize her, bind her," then addressing her he tells her that his threatening the life of the child was only a pretence to induce her to quit the altar, that he might get her into his hands without polluting the sacred shrine. He then sends her into the house, and says that the child's fate shall be decided by his daughter, to whom he will bring him. She may do as she pleases, kill him or let him live. Hearing these tauntings, Andromache exclaims that she is deceived by guile and fraud ; in heaven there are no gods, if none avenge her cause. We must now suppose Menelaus master of the scene. Andromache and her son in the hands of his slaves, she still scorning to sue for mercy, is borne to the back of the stage with her son, both guarded by the minions of Menelaus, but not taken into the house, as at first ordered by him. We must suppose Menelaus now either standing aside in the forepart of the scene conversing with his friends, or retired into the house to consult with his daughter. We are left in doubt which to conceive, particularly as Menelaus is shortly in the same scene again. The Chorus now sing an ode, which consists of a series of

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\* Disputes.

moralisms and aphorisms, such as the following: Woe to the house of a man who holds two wives under one roof.

“One bride then be content to wed,  
“Nor let a rival share her bed.”

That state is rent by factions which is governed by two monarchs, nay, even the bards, whose verses are of equal merit, shall fall to contention, for—

“Discord the Muses love to raise,  
“Each envious of the others praise.”

A vessel in distress is in less danger governed by an unskilful pilot, than if left to the direction of the crew indiscriminately.

A pathetic scene now ensues between the mother and son, and by the language put into the mouth of Molossus, we must suppose him to be at least a grown youth, though called a child. I am inclined to look upon this as a fault frequently met with in our ancient bards, and seldom more conspicuous than in this scene. Molossus can be little more than an infant, for supposing he was born within a year after Andromache came into the hands of Neoptolemus, he could be but seven years old, as it is but eight years since the fall of Troy. On the mother's bewailing their fate, and holding up her hands showing the blood streaming from her wrists, through the pressure of the chains, which have been placed there, she says—

“Bound in these galling chains, behold, my hands  
“Thus bleeding, I am sent beneath the earth.

“MOLOSSUS.

“My mother, O my mother, I too go,  
“Beneath thy wing, a victim to their hate.

"Ye potent lords\* of Phthia's realm, O come,  
 "My father come, and aid thy suffering friends !  
 "Ah me, unhappy me, what woe is mine !  
 "Thou too, my mother, hast thy share of woe."

Molossus now (by Andromache's instructions) appeals to Menelaus for mercy, who still delays more time in argumentation, until, in fact, his design is frustrated by the entrance of Peleus, and another set of attendants.

"PELEUS.

"To you my question I address, and theet  
 "Enforcing slaughter, what means this, and whence  
 "Proceeds it ? What disease infects this house ?  
 "Why, e'er the law gives sentence, are these deeds  
 "Attempted ? Menelaus, forbear, nor haste  
 "The uncondemn'd to punish.—With more speed  
 "Lead thou ; for this affair, it seems, delay  
 "Admits not.‡ Now, if ever,§ I could wish  
 "The strength of youth restor'd. But in her sails  
 "First I will breathe a fav'ring gale. | Inform me  
 "What justice¶ pleading these have bound thy hands  
 "In chains, and lead thee and thy son away :  
 "For in my absence, and thy lord's, to death  
 "Thee, like a sheep, with her poor lamb, they drag.  
 "Unbind her, I command you ; from her hands

\* This ought to be *lord*—it is applied to his father Neoptolemus, who is absent.

† To you all who are engaged in this violation of justice, and particularly to you, Menelaus, I address myself.

‡ I must be prompt in my proceedings, for these disturbers of the peace are proceeding to such extremes that I must check them without delay.

§ Now more than ever.

| My prayer is that a favouring gale may set in the sails of the ship that is carrying Neoptolemus here to his home.

¶ This is addressed to Andromache, and may be interpreted thus : tell me what *justification* does this man plead for thus manaceling you.

"Take off the chains, or some of you shall rue it.  
 "Shalt thou 'mongst men be reckon'd, thou most vile,  
 "And from the vile descended? What hast thou  
 "Of manly, by a Phrygian who thy bride  
 "Didst lose, thy house unbarr'd, unguarded left,  
 "As if thy wife, the worst of all her sex,  
 "Knew what discretion was? Nor, were her will  
 "Dispos'd, could one of Sparta's female race  
 "Be modest, where the virgins quit the house,  
 "And with uncinctur'd vests and naked thighs  
 "Mix with young men contending in the race,  
 "And share th' athletic sports, not, as I think,  
 "To be allow'd: what marvel if thus train'd  
 "Your daughters are not chaste? This should be ask'd  
 "Of Helen, who forsook her nuptial bed,  
 "Wantonly wand'ring to a foreign land  
 "With a young stranger. For her sake in arms  
 "Assembled all those numerous pow'rs of Greece  
 "Thou led'st to Troy: her with disdain to quit  
 "Behov'd thee more, and, having found her false,  
 "Not to have stirr'd a spear, but let her there  
 "Remain, nay e'en to have added a reward,  
 "That thou might'st never take her home again.  
 "Yet with no prosperous gale didst thou pursue  
 "Thy fond desire, but, many noble lives  
 "Destroy'd, make mothers childless in their house,  
 "And hoary fathers of their generous sons  
 "Deprive, of whom, unhappy, I am one:  
 "For as the murderer of Achilles thee,  
 "Like some tartarean pest that joys in blood,  
 "I view. Unwounded thee alone from Troy  
 "Greece saw return'd, and in their splendid case  
 "Thy splendid arms, as they were thither borne,  
 "Brought back.\* Before his nuptials oft my voice  
 "Gave him† monition not to form with thee

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\* This is an insinuation that Menelaus kept as much as possible out of the fighting before Troy; in fact, so much so that his suit of armour is brought back to Greece, safely packed in a case, without even a mark upon it to show that the wearer had been in actual engagement.

† I frequently cautioned Neoptolemus against marrying your daughter on account of the bad example set her by her mother Helen.



"Alliance, nor receive within his house  
 "From a bad mother one that had her birth ;  
 "For such bring with them all their mother's faults.  
 "Ye woers, this your fix'd attention claims,  
 "Daughters of virtuous mothers make your brides.  
 "Besides, thy brother basely didst thou wrong,  
 "Impelling him most foolishly to slay  
 "His daughter ; such thy fear lest thy base wife  
 "Thou shou'dst not gain. When thou hast vanquish'd Troy,  
 "For that I now must mention, and thy wife  
 "A captive was deliver'd to thy hands,  
 "Thou didst not kill her, but her beauteous breast  
 "Soon as thou saw'st, thou threw'st thy sword away,  
 "And with a kiss receiv'dst her, making court  
 "To the unblushing traitress, thou most vile  
 "Master'd by wanton appetite. And next  
 "To my son's house thou cam'st, and spreading there  
 "Thy ravage, in his absence without shame  
 "Murderest a wretched woman, and her son,  
 "Who, though of spurious\* birth, shall make thee rue,  
 "Ay, and thy daughter too, your base attempt.  
 "For oft the thirsty land will team with grain  
 "Richer than harvests on a deeper soil : †  
 "And oft the spurious sons in worth excell  
 "Those of legitimate birth. Vaunt not thy self,  
 "But bear thy daughter hence. A man allied  
 "To one of meaner rank, if faithfull, finds  
 "More honour than from those, who proudly boast  
 "Their greatness : but to nothing hast thou claim."

Menelaus now attempts to justify himself in his proceedings, accusing Peleus of a want of wisdom in thus raking up old matters, at the same time excusing him, because that he is aged, and weak. Do not you (says he) excite me, it was by the hand of her brother-in-law, Paris, that thy son Achilles fell, for she was the wife of

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\* This merely means not a native of Greece.

† That land with but a moderate surface, if well irrigated, will produce a better crop than a deeper soil of an inferior quality.

his brother, Hector. She is not fit to dwell under one roof with thy son, and it is through consideration for him, and thee, that I seek to put her and her child to death; also, for sake of the honour of my own house, as thy son hath married my daughter. Would you sanction that the lawful wife of Neoptolemus be thrust aside, and that his sons by this woman become lords of this land? Shall they, who are of a barbaric race, reign over Grecians? Is it not right that my daughter shall seek redress on account of the injustice of her fallen position in the house of thy grandson. You need not revile me for the part I have acted respecting my wife, Helen; you ought rather to give me credit for temperate wisdom in staying my hand from shedding her blood for offences sprung not from her will, but by the designs of the gods. I urge this argument out of regard to your age, not from anger. Your mind is influenced by rage, whilst I am cautious and careful not to offend you. There is much sophistry in Menelaus's remarks, particularly as he insinuates that Peleus slew his own brother, Phocus. Potter has a note upon this head as follows:—He cites Pausanias as having written that Peleus and his brother, Telamon, used a large rough stone as a disc in their exercises of the Pentathlon, where they had invited their brother, Phocus, against whom Peleus designedly hurled the stone and killed him, to gratify their mother. This same stone was afterwards placed upon the tomb of Phocus. Peleus now orders Menelaus's minions to stand aside. Let me see, says he, who dares to disobey me. Then consoling Andromache, he bids the child (under the protection of his arm) to unbind his mother. And turning to Menelaus, reproaches him for thus vilely torturing the

woman, designating the chains he has used as instruments more fitted to bind a lion or a bull, than a helpless human creature. Finding Peleus thus resolute, the crafty coward, Menelaus, succumbs, saying he will do nothing at Phthia against the state; he will retire, but return shortly and ascertain from Neoptolemus himself his resolution in the matter; and he has the audacity to tell Peleus, as he leaves the scene, that he has no power, that he can do nothing but talk. We need not doubt but Peleus disdains to reply, for the words used by Menelaus are more applicable to himself than to the brave old man. Then addressing Andromache and Molossus, Peleus says—

“Go forward, child, beneath my sheltering arms,  
 “And thou unhappy dame: the raging storm  
 “Escap’d, in harbour thou art now secure.

“ANDROMACHE.

“O reverend king, may the gods pour on thee  
 “Their blessings, and on thine, for that my son  
 “And me, a wretched woman, from base wrong  
 “Thou hast protected; yet take heed, lest now  
 “Crouching in ambush on the desert\* road  
 “By force they bear me off, thy hoary age  
 “Perceiving, and my weakness, and my son  
 “An infant: weigh these things; lest our escape  
 “Avails us nothing, if hereafter seiz’d.

“PELEUS.

“Do not enforce a woman’s fears on me.  
 “Go: who shall touch you? He, who dares, shall weep.  
 “For, so the gods have grac’d me, troops of horse  
 “And numerous foot at Phthia I command.  
 “I too am firm in strength, nor, as thou deem’st,

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\* Deserted.

"With years enfeebled : should I only look  
 "On such a man, old as I am, of him  
 "A trophy\* I should raise : for many youths  
 "An old man, if his courage glows, excels :  
 "A dastard what doth strength of limb avail ?"

[*Exeunt.*]

After Peleus has left the stage with Andromache and Molossus, the Chorus sing:

"EPOD.

"Age-honour'd king, whose gen'rous blood  
 "Derives from Æacus† its source,  
 "Thou, when the Lapithæ‡ embattled stood,  
 "And the fierce Centaurs shook the dreadful spear,§  
 "Stood'st foremost in the dang'rous war,  
 "Dauntless in arms to quell their monstrous force.  
 "Thee too the gallant Argo|| bore

\* I am not so old nor feeble but that my mere menace to Menelaus would make him crouch with fear, and I should easily attain him as a war trophy.

† Æacus was king of Cœnopia; his parents were Jupiter and Æginæ. We are told that the island he governed was visited by a plague, and that all his subjects died; after which Jupiter turned some ants into men, and resuscitated the country. Telamon and Peleus were his sons by Endeis, his other son Phocus was by Psamathe. It was out of jealousy of Psamathe that Endeis induced her two sons, Telamon and Peleus, to murder their brother Phocus.

‡ This word applies to the descendants of Periphas and Phorbas. The parents of these two were Lapithus and Orsinome; he the son of Apollo and Stilbe, she the daughter of Euronymus. The wife of Phorbas was named Hyrmene, whose father was Epeus, the man that designed the wooden horse before Troy, which was taken within the gates and proved her destruction. Phorbas and Hyrmene were the parents of Actor.

§ This alludes to a contest which ensued at the marriage festival of Pirithous with Hippodamia, through Eurythion, one of the Centaurs, taking indecent liberties with the bride.

|| There have been so many different opinions respecting the origin of this name that there can be little wonder at the names of Æacus and

"The black inhospitable Euxine\* o'er,  
 "Through clashing rocks, whose threat'ning brow  
 "Frowns o'er the roaring deep below.†  
 "When first Alcides‡ to the ground  
 "Vindictive bow'd Troy's rampir'd pride,  
 "And spread the raging slaughter wide,  
 "Was Peleus then inactive found ?  
 "Eurotas§ heard thy honour'd name  
 "Equal'd with Jove's illustrious son's in fame."

A female attendant now enters, and informs the Chorus that Hermione has attempted her own life, despairing of being excused by Neoptolemus for her conduct towards Andromache and her son. Hereupon Hermione rushes in, wildly raving :—

"Oh wretched ; wretched me ! thus will I rend

Inachus being confounded ; they are both described as having crossed the sea in a ship called the *Argo*, which name arises, according to some, from Argos, others from Argo, the son of Jason. We are told that the *Argo*, which carried Jason and his companions to Colchis, was the first ship that ever sailed ; and after his expedition Jason had the vessel consecrated. If Æacus, Inachus, and Noah were one and the same individual, it is very easy to account for the ship, which carried Inachus into Greece from Egypt being called an *Argo*, there being an evident intention on the part of the ancients to make this period of the world's history as much a regeneration of mankind as possible ; and so, it is possible, that this *Argo*, being the first ship ever built and consecrated, was the identical ark alluded to which sheltered Noah or Inachus.

\* This is an error. *Euxine* should not be termed inhospitable, it conveys quite on opposite meaning, as it is derived from *Euxenus*, which means hospitable, the reverse of which is *Axenus*.

† It was supposed by the ancients that the *Euxinus Pontus* (the Black Sea) had a subterraneous passage communicating with the Caspian Sea.

‡ Hercules.

§ The *Eurotas*, here alluded to, was the father of Sparta, and was king of Laconia, through which country the river passes, which bears his name, *Eurotas*.

"My tresses ; with my nails thus tear my cheeks.  
 "Thus from my hair my finely-textur'd veil  
 "I rend, and toss it to the winds of heav'n.  
 "Why should I cover with my robes my breasts ?\*  
 "What I have done is to my husband's eye  
 "Uncover'd, unconceal'd, conspicuous, clear.†  
 "Ah, from my hands why didst thou wrest the sword ?  
 "Give it me back, give it me back, my friend,  
 "That I may plunge it deep into my breast.  
 "Why from the strangling cord dost thou restrain me ?  
 "Alas my fate ! Where is the welcome flame  
 "That blazes to consume me ? From what height  
 "Shall I plunge headlong in the sea beneath,  
 "Or cast me from the mountain's woody steep‡  
 "That I may die, and join the pitying shades ?  
 "My father, thou has left me, left me here  
 "Like a wreck'd vessel, destitute of oars,  
 "Driv'n on the lonely strand ; and ruin soon,  
 "Ruin will reach me. In that house, which once  
 "A bride I enter'd, I shall dwell no more.  
 "A suppliant to whose statues shall I fly ?  
 "Or, sentenc'd to quit Phthia, fall a slave  
 "At a slave's knees ? Oh that I were a bird  
 "Of dusky wing.§ o'er the swift bark, which first||  
 "Brav'd the rough Euxine, and its clashing rocks !"

The attendant now pacifies Hermione, and remarks that she sees a stranger advancing, upon which Orestes enters, and asks if this is the house of Neoptolemus ; and, in reply to the Chorus why he inquires thus, he says that he is the son of Agamemnon, and, as he is

\* This is said in reply to her attendant, who reminds her that she is exposing her bosom.

† Meaning all that has transpired will be reported to him.

‡ This is a repetition of precisely the same language used by the same poet in a former character (a slave), which I have described previously.

§ The eagle.

|| The *Argo*, which carried Jason and his followers.



passing through Phthia on his way to the Dodonæan Jove's Temple, he is desirous to see Hermione, who is allied to him by blood. Upon hearing these remarks Hermione exclaims—

“O son of Agamemnon, from the storm  
“Thou art an harbour to the lab'ring bark :”

and, throwing herself on her knees, she supplicates him for assistance. Orestes is amazed, and asks what it can mean, a queen in such a state of despair, from whence ariseth thy woes, says he ; come they from the gods ? Partly from the gods, some from my husband, and some occasioned by myself. On all sides am I afflicted, says Hermione. Orestes guesses part of what has transpired, and the rest is confirmed by what Hermione tells him. What induced you to act thus, asks Orestes ? The voices of bad women, replies she. Oh take me hence, for if I remain I shall be made a slave, where I have been a queen. Now Orestes speaks out plainly, telling Hermione the true purport of his visit, in the following speech :—

“ORESTES.

“Wisdom was his,\* who first instructed man  
“In person of affairs to be inform'd.  
“I, knowing the confusion of this house,  
“And all the variance 'twixt thee and the wife  
“Of Hector, waited not, with cold regard  
“Attending, to be told thy will, if here  
“T' abide, or, dreading with well-grounded fear  
“A captive woman, to withdraw thee hence :  
“But came, not waiting thy commands, if such  
“Thy cause of grief as I have heard from thee,  
“To bear thee from this house ; for thou wast mine

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\* Prometheus.

" Before, though by thy father's falseness now  
 " Thou dwellest with this man : for e'er he march'd  
 " Against the Trojan state, to me he pledg'd  
 " Thy hand in marriage ; afterwards to him,  
 " Who calls thee now his wife, he promis'd thee,  
 " If he would lay the tow'rs of Troy in dust.  
 " To Phthia when the victor chief return'd,  
 " Him, for thy father patient I forgave,  
 " Thy nuptials to relinquish I implor'd,  
 " Urging my fortunes, and the vengefull pow'rs  
 " Who then afflicted me ; that I perchance  
 " Among my friends, by blood allied, might wed,  
 " A grace from strangers to an out-cast wretch,  
 " Out-cast like me, not easily indulg'd :  
 " My suit his fiery insolence rejects,  
 " Upbraids me with the murder of my mother,  
 " And the grim-visag'd furies. In despair,  
 " For then the fortunes of my house were low,  
 " I griev'd indeed, but silent bore my grief  
 " With my afflictions sunk, and went away  
 " Of thee, against my soul's warm wish, depriv'd.  
 " But now, since thou hast found a wayward change  
 " Of fortune, and thy heart desponding sinks,  
 " I from this house will lead thee, guard thee well,  
 " And give thee to thy father's hand ; for strong  
 " The bond of kindred, and in ills no zeal  
 " Is warmer than a friend's by blood allied.

" HERMIONE.

" To what concerns my marriage with due care  
 " My father will attend : it is not mine  
 " That to determine. But with quickest speed  
 " Convey me hence ; lest, should he first return,  
 " My lord prevent me ; or, should Peleus learn  
 " From his son's house that I have made escape,  
 " He with his fleetest horse pursue my flight.

" ORESTES.

" Let not the old man's pow'r alarm thy fears ;  
 " Nor dread Achilles' son, whose fiery pride

"Insulted me : th' entangling toils of fate,\*  
 "Through which he cannot burst, are by this hand  
 "Fix'd against him : these I explain not now,  
 "But there effect the Delian rock shall know.  
 "This murderer of his mother,† if the oaths  
 "Of my brave friends hold in the Pythian land  
 "Their faith, shall show him he did wrong to wed  
 "One first to me betroth'd ; and he shall rue  
 "His call for vengeance for his father's death  
 "On royal Phœbus ; nor avails him now  
 "His thought to reverence chang'd ; for by the god,  
 "And through my just resentment, he shall die  
 "A wretched death, and feel my enmity.‡  
 "For the god gives the fate of foes to change  
 "Revers'd, nor pride's aspiring thoughts endures.  
 [*Exeunt*, and end of Lecture 24.

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\* Orestes has already killed Neoptolemus, and ambiguously refers to the act.

† The insinuation cast upon him (Orestes) by Neoptolemus.

‡ This sentence is craftily uttered, and is an exemplification of duplicity ; for it is applied as if Neoptolemus were still living, whilst he knows he has destroyed him.

## LECTURE XXV.

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I finished my last Lecture where Orestes and Hermione left the scene, he having carried her off. I now take up that part where the Chorus sing, which allows time for Hermione's escape; then Peleus enters and inquires whether the rumour he has heard respecting Hermione's departure is correct or not, and he is informed that it is true. She has gone with Orestes, the son of Agamemnon, who designs to wed her himself, and kill Neoptolemus at the Delphic shrine, says the Chorus. The expressions used by Orestes, unguardedly before the Chorus, seems to have been rightly interpreted by them, but, in fact, Orestes has already caused Neoptolemus's death. Upon hearing the Chorus's explanation, Peleus exclaims,—

“Ah, this is to be dreaded. One of you  
“Fly to the Pythian shrine with swiftest speed,  
“To our friends there each circumstance relate,  
“Of what hath happen'd here, e'er by his foes  
“The brave son of Achilles basely fall.”

Hereupon a messenger enters, and says he has unhappy tidings to relate, upon which Peleus expresses an ill-omened belief that his grandson is dead.

## " MESSENGER.

" That ill, O reverend Peleus, thou must know.  
 " Thy son's son is no more, slain by the swords  
 " Deep-wounding of the Delphians, led by one  
 " A stranger\* of Mycenæ.

## " PELEUS.

" Oh, I am nothing ; lost, quite lost ; my voice  
 " Fails me, my trembling limbs beneath me fail.  
 " O fate, how heavy dost thou fall on me  
 " Thus trembling on the extreme verge of age !  
 " How fell the only son of him who was  
 " My only son ? I wish, yet dread to hear."

The messenger now (in Euripides' usual extravagant description of valour) describes Neoptolemus's brave defence and fall, and ends by showing his own cowardice (as is also usually described by Euripides in his slave or servile characters). When Neoptolemus was slain, says the messenger, his companions snatched the body away and have brought it to thee, old man, to look upon. (Why did they not defend their master's life.)

## " PELEUS.

" Wretch† that I am, what an affliction this  
 " Which here I see, and bear into my house !  
 " My heart is rent with sorrow. O thou state  
 " Of Thessaly, on me hath fall'n,  
 " And desolation : I have now no race,  
 " I have no child remaining in my house.  
 " Cruel misfortune ! On what friend mine eye  
 " Shall I now cast, to find in him a joy ?  
 " Oh that dear mouth ! those cheeks, those hands, how dear !  
 " Better have died beneath the walls of Troy,  
 " And on the banks of Simois found thy fate !

\* Orestes.

† Unhappy mortal.

"O nuptials, fatal nuptials !\* You have brought  
 "Destruction on this house, and on my state !  
 "Ah miserable me ! Would that my house,  
 "Unhappy through thy marriage bed, my son,  
 "Had ne'er receiv'd Hermione, a bride  
 "Fatal to thee ! Would she had perish'd first,  
 "That pest of hell, with blasting thunder struck !  
 "Oh that thou† ne'er had'st charg'd thy father's blood,  
 "Thy noble father by his arrows slain,  
 "On Phoebus, nor his vengefull pow'rs inflam'd,  
 "A mortal thou contending with the god !"

Here again ensues a general wailing and moaning, of which we have had "something too much of late," and I feel a little relief that I am drawing to a close with this poet, for the present. In describing Neoptolemus's proceedings at Delphi, the messenger remarks, that as he remained there three days, and attended the temple each day, his conduct excited suspicion, particularly as Orestes had circulated a report that he was present with an intention of plundering the temple ; (I have told you in another place, that on account of the great wealth of this temple, incursions were frequently made to plunder it), and when he entered within the sacred edifice a whole band of armed men, headed by Orestes, set upon him. Upon this he (Neoptolemus) armed himself with a weapon which hung close by, he gashed, and clashed, and fought, and killed, but he was ultimately subdued himself. The language is a mere repetition of that which is so extravagantly used by the same poet where he is describing the valour of Orestes and Pylades

\* Neoptolemus's marriage with Hermione—mentally referring to Helena, her mother.

† This alluded to Paris, who killed Achilles with a poisoned arrow, which stuck in his vulnerable part—his heel.



on being seized when they landed at Tauris. Upon the whole I entirely agree with Potter, that "Euripides tells his story very ill," of course it must be understood *this* story. "Andromache" he makes too much transpire during Neoptolemus's absence, which we have no reason to consider could have been above a week, for he was at Delphi but three days, and we have only to allow a reasonable time for his journey thither, as no allusion is made to his having been elsewhere. It is avowedly declared that he went there expressly to get absolution from an oath he had made. Then again the sudden disappearance and continued absence of Menelaus (leaving his daughter Hermione alone, after having been engaged with her in a desperate adventure), is hardly natural, at all events it develops bad judgment, and the only possible reasons we can assign are two: one might be that he was preparing his armed force to attack Peleus, or the other (by far the most probable), that he was too great a coward to enter again upon the scene in any contest whatever, and so he left his daughter to the mercy of her enemy Peleus. The unity of time spoken of by Potter hardly applies, for it is evident that what Orestes says is after the murder has been committed, and that he has an evident design to carry Hermione off, and if there be any suddenness of expressions on his part, it is to be attributed to the conveniences presenting for his purpose, for he could not have anticipated she would be so ready and prepared for the adventure. I think the poet intended to show this, but he has not developed his intention so well here as he has in many of his plays. I think the finest scene in the whole piece is where Peleus declares himself a wretched old man, childless, and forsaken, when the

news is brought him of Neoptolemus's death. There is a great deal too much talk about temples, too, in this piece, for we are informed that Neoptolemus went to Delphi to the temple there, whilst close to his own palace was situate the great temple to Thetis, where, in fact, the scene of this play is laid, and there is no reason at all assigned for what purpose Orestes says he is going to the temple of Dodona. This latter temple was situate near to the city of Dodona, in Chaonia in Epirus, and was dedicated to Jupiter. It was the most ancient oracle of Greece, and was planted round with laurels, which were made to deliver the responses; the leaves were made to move, and voices were heard which were interpreted by the presiding authorities to proceed from two doves kept in the temple. I think I need not tell you that these deceptions were occasioned through the simplicity of the people and the superstition by which they were surrounded. These things led them into all sorts of extravagant notions; the priests themselves were called doves (Jönah), and Pausanias tells us that the Pleiades were priestesses at a Dodonæan temple situate at Chaonia. There can be little doubt but Pausanias alludes to the same temple, only that he speaks of it at its earliest period, when women officiated there as well as men. The Pleiades were the daughters of Atlas, their mother's name being Pleione. You are aware that there is a constellation in the heavens known by this name; it is situate in the zodiac, and consists of seven stars, one of them is not so bright as the rest, which is accounted for by the ancients because that one of the ladies married a mortal instead of a god. We are also told that Thetis was the only goddess ever married to a mortal. Atlas, as I have told you before, was a

great astronomer, and it probably is to be attributed to this circumstance that his seven daughters are said to have been made stars of, and placed as a constellation in the heavens.

The temple of Delphi was erected to Apollo, and was situate, according to some opinions, in the chasm between the two hills (the biceps) Mount Parnassus. Others have said that it was situate on the south-west of the hill, where a town stood of the same name which was derived from Delphus, a son of Apollo. It has been asserted that Apollo himself built the temple and dedicated it to his son. Then again we are informed that the son built both town and temple, and consecrated the temple to his father. The former is the most probable of the two, from the fact of the name being taken from Delphus, and it is most probable that the temple was in the valley, because it bore the name *Parnassus Nape*, which means the Valley of Parnassus. Here an extraordinary exhalation, *exhalare solum*, issued from the earth, which when inhaled, elated the individual operated upon, and produced a sort of intoxication, during which period their expressions were wild and extravagant, then they were interpreted by the priests (need I say, as usual) to their own ends. (Oh! if I could but inspire all my hearers with the same penetration that I think I possess myself regarding this description of deception, I firmly believe I should succeed in creating a more sincere devotion to the one great Deity, who really exists). Now, in concluding this piece, let me tell you that the catastrophe of the whole play turns upon an oath that Neoptolemus has taken against the god Apollo, for being instrumental to his father's (Achilles) death, and he goes to Apollo's shrine to ask for absolution for this

offence. Apollo has been a guardian to Orestes, who makes this partly the pretext for his assassinating the rash youth, Neoptolemus, who has twitted Orestes for killing Clytemnestra. The real cause, after all, for murdering Neoptolemus, was because Orestes wanted to possess Hermione himself, she having been previously promised him by her father Menelaus.

Now to turn to a few more remarks of Schlegel's, respecting our poet Euripides—then to a chapter upon Astronomy. He says that *Anacharsis* both praises and censures Euripides, although he (*Anacharsis*) “softens everything for the sake of his object of showing the productions of the Greeks in every department under the most favourable light.” This allusion to *Anacharsis*, is an evident fact that Schlegel knew he was himself guilty of the caprice which I have in another place accused him of, viz., blowing hot and cold in regard to our poet, and he endeavours to justify himself by the foregoing remark, which I have quoted, which remark frustrates the very object he has in view, for it cannot, in reason, be said that an author is endeavouring to show everything in the most favourable light, whilst in fact he is alternately praising, and scolding; then our critic cites Sophocles as having used some “cutting remarks” against Euripides, and he goes on qualifying Sophocles’ proceedings, by saying, that when Euripides died, Sophocles mourned him and paid respect to his memory. This circumstance I have alluded to in the very early part of my lectures, so it cannot be said that I got the idea from Schlegel, as I then knew nothing of him. I think the fact of Sophocles showing so much concern for Euripides, arose from a conviction that he had been too severe upon him, as Schlegel has

been. I admit that Euripides has faults, which mainly exist in his extravagantness, and an universal error of telling his plots before he begins his narrations, we know all too soon; these are his two predominant faults, his others are minor errors, and they exist, more or less, in every writer. I think Schlegel has been too sweeping in his condemnations. Dear me, did it never strike him that men are not always in the same tone of thought; what author ever wrote a number of plays that were all uniformly beautiful? Schlegel himself, though a highly learned man, must sometimes submit to a lesser light, like myself, correcting him; besides which, we do not all see matters the same, and too frequently we neglect to investigate our own remarks upon the subjects we have been dilating. After all Schlegel comes to my way of thinking, for he quotes Plato as having condemned Euripides' extravagantness. If Schlegel had kept merely to this argument, he and I would have agreed, as much as we agree with Plato. I would willingly conclude this question here, but I am constrained to make a few further remarks, particularly to ask why Schlegel presumes in saying that Aristotle did not mean that Euripides was perfect in the tragic art, when he says that he (Euripides) is "the most tragic poet." And how on earth can he reasonably come to such an "impotent conclusion," that Aristophanes' derisive attacks upon Euripides are "well known" but "not understood." Now to conclude this argument, Schlegel says, that the scholiast stringently criticises our poet, but Schlegel does not tell us where. In like manner, he cites Aristarchus, and the Alexandrian critics as having censured Euripides, but nowhere does he point out these censures; in



fact, in none of the authors quoted by Schlegel do we find such sweeping remarks as are made by Schlegel himself; in other respects Schlegel looks at our poet's character in very like manner to what I have repeatedly expressed, for instance, he says that Euripides' belief was problematical, I have told you that though Euripides professed to believe in one God, he made sacrifices to the gods generally. Schlegel says, that Euripides introduces his spectators to a familiar acquaintance with his characters, I have told you that he has rendered them natural and easy (always allowing for his occasional extravagantness); he is truthful to nature because he has drawn his characters "as they were, not what they ought to be." This is the opinion of Schlegel, for he quotes Sophocles' remarks to this effect. I will now finish this article by endeavouring to explain Euripides' meaning of two quotations, Schlegel has made. He condemns this passage: "The tongue swore, but the mind was unsworn." This showed the poet's knowledge of human nature, and he was pointing out the duplicity of what we know as a "mental reservation." Then again, "For a kingdom it is worth while to commit injustice, but in other cases it is well to be just." Here the poet's meaning may be interpreted several ways. Every man has his price. To do a great good, we may do a little wrong. For a great personal gain it is excusable to commit a slight error, for we are all of us frail. "Put not faith in princes." They can lie as well as other men; there is no more purity in their blood than in yours or mine, and there is a precious deal more fudge in their noddles than there generally is in ordinary worldly men of good understanding and honourable motives. Princes exist



under the law of primogeniture, and they are just as likely to inherit their parents' vices as their virtues. All I know (in conclusion) is, that they ought all to be very virtuous, for they cost a great deal of money to be set rightly upon their feet, yet they frequently kick the basis loose upon which they might consolidate a sound foundation, had they minds and hearts up to the same standard as their blood has been vaunted forth. To the venal and servile mind the blood of a prince is always up to high-pressure purity, whilst frequently the coral stream that flows through the honest heart of the great souled, but poor man, is far more pure than the stream in either prince or parasite.

If there be any particular attribute that you will give me credit for more than others, I think it will be candour, perhaps were I to recount the many squabbles this leading feature of my character has led me into, I might (looking at it in one light) consider it has been my bane throughout life. I would like very much to relate to you a few of the mishaps my candour has led me into; but it would be digressing from my usual discourses, so let me at once tell you, candidly, that although I venture occasionally to talk of astronomy, my scientific knowledge of the subject is but limited, therefore my remarks relating to the various theories already propounded by writers upon the science, will be all of them more or less relative or comparative. I do not presume to propound a new theory of my own, yet, ere I conclude my remarks, let me tell you that it is my intention to offer a notion or two for your consideration—for I've an idea that we may, by studying the conceptions of various philosophers, come ultimately (by comparisons) to facts, or at least so near to

them, that our imagination can carry us no further; for to the human intellect there must be a limit,—the only thing I think there is in existence without limit is space, chaos, the vast expanse which encompasses us on all sides, the beautiful canopy of heaven fretted with innumerable bright electric orbs, the creation of an almighty, an undefinable power. Now the fact that my mind carries me to is this—that conception cannot realise anything beyond the sun's being the centre of the universe. Heraclitus and Anaximander said that the sun is a magnetic stone; and Philolaus, of Crotona, asserted that it is a great crystal *שקרש*, illuminated by a central mass of burning matter. I think we must all admit that these notions were hypothetical in the extreme, and that no satisfactory reason is assigned in either instance; but when we look at the radiant luminary, to which all and everything in the immense universe seems to be subject, can we, without encouraging a perversity in our own nature, come to any other conclusion than that the sun is the one great central pivot of all creation, to which all that is is subject, or, at all events, if there be a more central attraction, to us, it has no delineation. Now the next questions are, of what is the sun composed, and what are its dimensions. Who can answer these? Who dares presume so far as to say he has discovered either? We may imagine, and we may conjecture on these heads, but, after all, however far our philosophers may attain to excellence in the science of astronomy, these two questions must for ever remain in obscurity. The circumference of the sun and the space between it and us cannot be recounted in any way to be relied upon. Oliver Goldsmith has asserted that its circumference is

a million times greater than that of this earth, which, of course, is jumping at a conclusion, and is as illusory as are other calculations in this respect ; for although we may fairly admit that great facts have been discovered by profound systems of calculation resorted to by our scientific men, I venture boldly to assert that we shall never know definitely what the sun really is, how far it is from us, nor what is its circumference ; therefore let us be content upon this head, and put a limit upon our presumption, not to venture too far upon the prerogative of the infinite power ; let us rest satisfied in knowing that it is by the influence of the sun's radiance that we exist, and, until we can discover what is the vital spark in the human body and become entire master of it, let us not presume to fathom that to which the vitality of all creation is indebted. The human intellect is capable of conceiving but one influence beyond the central power of all existence, and that is the benign spirit which presides over it, God יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים. I will not here enter into the theological question what God is, further than to tell you that the various ideas concerning him are all, to all intents and purposes, delusive. What should such animalculæ as we are know what the infinite power is, beyond the mere conjecture of our own mental notions. Vain man ! how abortive is thy very existence. Why then shall we venture to fathom deeper into the mysteries of the divine will, whilst we cannot grapple with the mere infinitesimal particle which the supreme authority has infused into us, for the sake of our mere existence, to strut an hour upon the stage of life, and then perhaps obliterate, as the spark from the smith's anvil. My idea is that we know nothing,

that the various assumptions regarding the great Creator are presumptuous, often ridiculous, and frequently sacrilegious. Let it content you, my friends, to be as I am, convinced in the existence of an omnipotent power, to which we are all indebted, and subject to His will here and hereafter ; for I hold it sheer nonsense asserting that we are made "after God's image," and such like conjectures. Such notions I at once and for ever abrogate as being delusive, presumptuous, wicked and profane. Now having thus far volunteered my convictions upon the fundamental principles of belief, I hope I have prepared you, dispassionately, to follow me without prejudice or superstition. I felt that, in common candour, the question I am about mooting demanded this acknowledgment on my part, because to go into it unreservedly requires my mind to be entirely free from conventionalities, and feel that it is (as 'twere) infusing and incorporating itself into the minds of those who listen to my humble notions. Now to the point. Anaximander and Heraclitus said that the sun and stars are supported by the igneous particles thrown off this earth. Upon such a hypothetical notion I think I need not descant. The littleness of their conjectures upon this head is quite apparent, for by such they would be making this minute pebble (for so it is, compared to the universe) the centre of all and everything. Then, our more modern writer, Oliver Goldsmith, in his "History of the Earth," says that the planets are each of them a thousand times larger than our earth, and that they were at one period "supposed to wander in the heavens without any fixed path." The supposition here alluded to I freely join in ; but the assumption of the dimensions of the planets I look upon in like manner

as his estimating the sun as a million times our circumference, for he seems to have made his calculations, in round numbers, without any previous consideration or reflection. We know that many of the ancient civilized races (particularly the Egyptians, from the origin of recorded facts), were extremely skilful in their knowledge of the heavenly bodies. According to modern science, we know, beyond doubt, that the earth, with the planets, form a system influenced by the sun, round which all revolve; in fact, as far as human understanding is capable of coming to a conclusion, we know this for a certainty, for the regularity of the system is calculated to a nicety. Goldsmith then goes on to say that "God chose to operate by second causes;" and, "to save himself from universal exertion, created an approximating influence," which he defines attraction, the centre of which he says is the sun. So far he and I agree; and I admit that he is correct in stating that the sun, being the largest body, possesses the greatest amount of attraction, but his next notion is illusory and speculative. He describes propelling power created by the hand of God opposed to the attraction of the sun's centre, in the following manner: he specifies God as making innumerable worlds, and throwing them carelessly into indescribable space; thus the hand of God he defines as the propelling power which is checked by the attraction of the sun. So it would seem that Providence is antagonistic to himself, and this is occasioned by Goldsmith's omitting to attribute another influence to the worlds thrown off by the hand of God; and he omitted to state in what situation he wished us to consider the maker of these worlds was located at the time he was casting them forth. His idea must have



been that God was in the centre of the sun, for he says that the propelling power of his hand sent the worlds to a certain distance, when their progress was arrested by the attraction of the sun. He must have thought so for this reason: had he placed the maker of the worlds in an opposite position to where the sun is located when the propelling power forced the worlds into the wide expanse, the sun's attraction would have brought them with a double force into contact with its own body. Now I am willing to take up part of Goldsmith's theory, and suppose, for sake of argument, that the sun, being the centre, is what we consider heaven, where the infinite power is organised, from thence the planets and this earth were thrown off, and remain suspended in space by virtue of their own specific gravity, acted upon by the elements surrounding them, and partly governed by the sun's central attraction. The different motions of the planets I attribute to their being of various forms. For instance, although the vulgar error is that this world is a perfect sphere, we know scientifically that it is not so, for it is flatter at each of the poles than at other parts; it is to this circumstance that we attribute the motion of our world continuing to turn upon its own axis, which it does diurnally. For instance, pressure is greater at each of the poles, which tends (as 'twere) to fix the globe, something similarly to an orange being pinched and so held between the thumb and finger, as I do now; thus you can turn it on its own axis. But to make it move with the universal system of planets, round the sun, the finger and thumb holding the orange must traverse with it and so form part of the movable elements which radiates the one great central orb. You will understand me, if you please, that my showing you this orange, thus suspended



between my thumb and finger, is merely to illustrate what I mean by the pressure at the two poles. You must not carry my hand and my body with the orange into the vortex of the motion, you must merely imagine it thus fixed by the pressure of my two digits; whilst to carry out the allusion, we will suppose that other digits, innumerable and of smaller dimensions, are pressing on every other part of the orange, so you have the configuration of the globe suspended in the elements by equal pressure on all its parts, excepting at its two poles, where the pressure is much greater. As it is carried by the elements round the sun it spins upon its axis because the pressure all round it is equal; whilst from pole to pole, because these parts are flatter, the pressure contends on the one side against the other, and creates a central polar force, so that the pressure from the south to the north goes direct through the globe, and I think that the planets digress from one universal motion, occasioned by a similar cause, variously configured. I believe that this world as well as all the other planets were originally a part of the sun, which I conceive to be an immense mass of molten fire, containing all the primitive properties of metals and minerals. The spots we see upon the sun may be occasioned (as has been held) by parts thrown off from combustion. When the part composing this earth was thrust forth, either by the hand of God or an accidental eruption of the sun, I think that its velocity caused it to spin, and, in its progress, to elongate somewhat into an oval form, but when its velocity was checked by the sun's attraction and it began to settle in its assigned situation, it still continued to spin upon its own axis, and its polar points being arrested it expanded and assumed its present form. The best com-

parison I can make here to show you my idea is, to describe it in its downward progress in the form of a lemon, or a spinning top, and, when arrested and settled into position by the sun's attraction, it then assumed the form of an orange. Now, again, relative to Goldsmith's theory, that God made the worlds and thrustured them forth into space, I think I have shown you that Goldsmith (although he did not say so) meant to place the Deity in the sun, this was evidently his notion, but I cannot imagine how he pictured to his mind the form or shape of God—for what God is I am sure has never been clearly defined. My idea of the omnipotent power carries me much further than a corporeal fact or a spiritual formation, and the extreme notion we can have of him is, that he is an ethereal essence, beyond this we are all in the dark, and we know not what God is; his power, doubtless, pervades everything; his influence governs all, and the whole of creation is subject to his will. From eternity God, by his infinite wisdom, created the universe immutable and perfect. To the intellectuality of his wisdom we shall never attain; it is like comparing the rude uncarved stone to the superior structure of a gorgeous palace of architectural splendour, turreted with magnificent towers and elaborately embellished with chevaux-de-frise and fretwork of the most artistic character, even then the comparison is insignificant, and, after all our studies, we know comparatively nothing beyond the four elements that surround us, of which we ourselves, in a measure partake—fire, air, earth, and water; these compose all bodies, the soul is the divine essence, which is infused into us by the Great Architect of the universe for a purpose undefined and unknown to us. Why may not meteors and shooting stars be other

worlds of smaller dimensions, composed of particles detached from some of the planets in like manner to what the planets and this world were originally cast from the sun, thrust forth by the will of Providence, and so lost to our visual organs, by the mere fact of intervening space. The inquiring mind, when once it sets to work upon a subject which interests it, rests not, so is it with me at this moment, for I am propelled involuntarily forward, and I must proceed, even at the risk of startling my hearers. We are told that in addition to the sun being the great centre, round which all and everything radiates, that amongst this everything other systems of planets are revolving round, and in the tracts of other fixed bodies similar to our sun. Well then, the question may fairly arise as follows:—If we can take such an object as a fixed star and all its attendant satellites into the mind by the means of a little eye, no bigger in circumference than about two inches, and when we also take into consideration that this fixed body and each of the stars that surround it may be larger than our own earth, can you, I say, bring to your conception the number of large warehouses you would require to stow away a mere thin cord—could you get one long enough to measure the distance from the remotest orb to your own hand. Now, supposing that these constellations, which I refer to, travelling round one centre and forming separate systems, who can say that these centres are not of greater magnitude than our sun, and perhaps each of these attendant satellites are again centres of other systems, their satellites being obscured from our vision by the immensity of space intervening between them and us. Then again, the question arises, did the God, whom we conceive as our God, create all these systems of worlds as

well as what seems to us the universe? The theory of such separate systems must be that there is no limit to the universal creation. Then we may imagine, this being the case, whether God visits them all, or has he placed deputies over each to govern them? It must be, as I said at first, that God's influence is so stupendous that it is quite outside the nature of man to attain to anything approaching to a reliable conception of what God really is, and I think we are little else than lunatics when we fancy otherwise. Now, my good friends, do not any of you leave me to-night shocked at my remarks, but ask yourselves a few questions calmly, deliberately, and dispassionately, then think if my worship of the Supreme Father is not more sincere and sacred than worshipping him through outward show, set rules, or conventionalities. I find fault with no man's conscientious belief, but I will not have dogmas thrust down my throat, nor will I tell a lie, saying I believe, whilst I feel convinced that not one in a hundred, who professes to believe, knows why he does so. In conclusion, my good friends, let me recommend you to go on inquiring, search for the truth, have faith in the infinite power, but presume not—always doubt (for you cannot help this). Inquire, I say, let your worship be sincere, with your hearts full of veneration and reverence, your souls absorbed in love for the one great Deity, divested of all conventionality, outward show, or fictitious idolatry.

Have you ever heard of such men as Burnet, Whiston, Woodward, Buffon, Ray, Kircher, Bourquat, Leibnitz, and Steno, these were all philosophers, and in their time had many disciples faithful to the opinions they propounded. Thomas Burnet was a native of

Croft, in Yorkshire, the time of his birth 1635. In 1688 he became chaplain to King William, and he died in the year 1715. The work he wrote, which has been the immediate cause of his name being more particularly handed down to posterity, is designated *Archæologia Philosophica, sive Doctrina Antiqua de Rerum Originibus*. The theory he held respecting the origin of the world I will endeavour to reduce into as simple descriptive language as I can, so that by illustrating his notions, as I proceed, I may bring the subject matter created by his ideas into such forms as may become clearly perceptible to your understanding. In the first place, he admitted the sun's being the original organic body in existence. He then describes a fluid of floating matter, of certain consistence, containing various substances floating in the atmosphere, but he neither defines distinctly of what the fluid was composed nor of what the particles it contained consisted. If I take up his theory at this point I must endeavour to open to you what his thoughts were. Well then, we will take this fluid-matter, by supposition, as being somewhat the consistence of treacle, and imagine it floating in the air, then spreading out into one flat lake or plain, with a smooth surface immediately opposite the sun. We must not forget one thing, that (according to his notions) it was impossible to place it in any other position but opposite to the sun; for as yet he has not admitted the existence of anything else but the sun in creation, so that no interception on any side of the sun could possibly have taken place. So far so good. Well then, this treacle, spread out into a plain, something resembling this thick sheet of dark brown stiff paper, suspended thus flat under this small electric light,



which you see is darting rays of heat, all over its surface. This liquid began to settle and precipitate its heavier particles into a deposit, which formed right throughout its centre, originating the mineral properties of the earth. Then came the mixed layers, consisting of mineral and earthy characters, overlaid again by another layer, consisting almost entirely of earthy matter, and then the entire mass surrounded by water. After this he placed a coat of oil swimming upon the surface of the water, and then the circumambient air. This was the state in which he left the earth floating, and before we come to his ideas of vegetation taking place let us understand that he placed the oil here to prevent friction between the two elements, air and water. After awhile he considers that the oily matter formed into a crust of alluvial soil. How the oil got through the water, or if he meant it to form a crust upon the water, he does not tell us; this was his antediluvian notion. Well now, before we proceed any further, let us examine into this flat world, as it must then have existed (always bearing in mind *if* it ever was as stated by Burnet), for he places the same water and oil at the top and the bottom, and I suppose he must have meant us to understand that they were also curling round the edges. He afterwards gives us an idea how that the surface towards the sun progressed, but he says very little indeed about his underside, which he left us to imagine was the colder side, for cold indeed it must have been without a single ray of light, or a particle of the sun's influence. I really wonder he did not go a little further, and account for the natural humidity of the atmosphere by stating that the pressure at the top and bottom of his liquid mass (as it con-



solidated the substantial parts into the centre) left the thinner or watery parts to overflow at the edges, and so form into clouds to be carried over the surface for the purpose of refreshing and sustaining it. Thus it was that up till now he kept the earth floating in water. It strikes me that it only requires this little episode of mine to complete the absurdity of Burnet's system of world-making. We have no really definite notion supplied us by Burnet how the waters subsided in any other way than by the sun's exhaling them; that being the case, he must have left the earth entirely without water, and I think you will admit that I have been rather charitable to him in creating some floating vapours to resuscitate his earth, as I shall immediately show to you that they were soon required. We now have the oil deposited upon the surface of the earth, forming an alluvial soil: the water has disappeared, and the sun's influence creating vegetation. He now places man here to be sustained by that vegetation, and he soon makes man's nature so rebellious, that he describes the displeasure of God and the destruction of mankind to have taken place in the following manner, all excepting eight individuals, these of course he meant as Noah and his family. They were so wicked, says he, that the Lord withdrew His influence, vegetation dried up, the earth began to crack, till great fissures were opened, wide and yawning gulfs penetrated to the very centre; and then came fearful desolation, for, finally, his ideas would lead us to suppose that the whole was crumbled up, something like my crushing this toy-world—this sheet of paper—which I have been illustrating my remarks to you with. Hitherto his notions were that the surface towards the sun enjoyed one perpetual spring, and that

everything was so regular in its formation, that neither hill nor mountain existed. We now come to see his notion of the destruction of the world, which is, if anything, more absurd than his creation of it, for when it tumbles to pieces he does not occasion its parts to disappear, but those pieces which double over he causes to bring down with them a quantity of air, which he encloses in the centre, leaving cracks and cavities upon the surface to form beds for the flowing waters. I must here pause to remind you that he has previously described the waters to have disappeared, and he gives us very little account of the underside of his world, leaving us to imagine that it was the dark abyss of perpetual night. Well now, we have his ideas of the earth forming into a more consolidated shape, into the form of a globe, with visible mountains, rocks, islands, seas, and rivers. We lose sight of his earth oil altogether, for it has vanished from the surface, and the only way we can account for its entire disappearance, I suppose, would be described by him (were he alive to contest the point with me) by stating that it was occasioned by the irrigation of the soil, caused by the practices of husbandry and excavations. The oil disappearing into the interior, we must now dig for it, and make wells ere we are enabled to collect it, as we do in Canada. We have nothing to show in his theory, more than imagination, that earth oil really did exist; but upon this head let us give him the benefit of the doubt, and to throw a little oil upon your troubles let me end them by making your ideas so smooth that you may feel as if I have sprinkled some of Aldridge's Balm of Columbia, or Roland's Macassar upon your devoted heads. I have described to you Burnet's notions of the antediluvian state of this

earth ; but I have not been able for the want of material to describe his notions of the first creation of animal life, and I will not venture now to disseminate my own ideas upon the subject, for I fear I should be likely to run counter to the thoughts implanted into the minds of most people, for it is almost an universal habit on the part of the million to credit what they have read and been told regarding this subject. I do not say that I will not turn to the question on a future occasion, but I prefer to defer it until we become better acquainted, so that what I may venture to propound may not be misconstrued or perverted. I may, nevertheless, without any risk, go so far now as to say, that if we desire to investigate into the probable origin of this globe, we ought first of all to satisfy ourselves that we are organically minute particles of its component and concomitant parts, originally deposited by exhalation and vegetation upon its surface, then brought into active life, and permitted to germinate by the sun's influence, in like and similar manner to general vegetation ; permitted (for some purpose or other) to perambulate and propagate, for we are undoubtedly vegetating as we progress ; and as we partake of the various elements, so shall we ultimately evaporate into the one general primeval existence ; for even the mummy prepared by the most skilful sciences of former ages, will, in time, be annihilated, and either crumble or shrivel up literally to nothing ; for time, like space, is indefinite ; we have neither the power to conceive the extent of the one, nor the capacity to imagine the beginning nor the ending of the other. When we can bring our presumptuous minds to this consistence, we may venture to form conjectures of the origin of the globe we inhabit. Now as I am at once free to

admit the littleness of my own nature, and evanescence of my very existence, I have, at least, a right to expect respect from my fellow animaculæ, and to be listened to with patience and courtesy ; but let me caution you not to take all my remarks as being conveyed absolutely, but allow for a large share of figurativeness and imaginativeness, for wherever we have to go into theoretical notions these two propensities must form more or less concomitant parts of our ideas, and as I am now going to conclude this article, upon the creation of the world, let me tell you that if I am fortunate enough to remain upon its surface, for a short period more, I will return to the same subject, and treat upon Buffon, a philosopher in whom I place greater reliance (but not implicitly so) than I do upon Burnet, upon whose system I have been dilating. End of Lecture XXV.

## LECTURE XXVI.

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Having accidentally come across a pamphlet, by the Rev. John Cumming. D.D., F.R.S.E., in which he condemns Bishop Colenso, I will just venture to review it, without at all entering deeply into the question of theology, for I like rather to point out the probable hypothesis of great men (or, I should say, supposed great men) than to enter into any pointed argument with them, for bigoted people would be sure to attack me with a remark like the following: "You must believe in the revelation *as it is handed down to you*, or not at all." It is well known that this is a common expression, and is, in fact, about the greatest dogma resorted to, for he who is weak enough to fall under the influence of such an enigmatical solution is at once lost to the real sense of reasoning, and becomes an easy victim to superstition and sophistry. Then, on the other hand, I am not prepared to hold with the Bishop, for his want of consistency in retaining his office, whilst it is literally impossible he can believe in what he preaches. This is one good reason for showing that we require a creed of religion governed by pure morality, rather than by things professedly supernatural. Why not call a spade a spade, and duplicity what it really is—humbug. Now, though I think there is much sophistry and bigotry in

Cumming's argument, I must admit that there is consistency of character throughout his professions, whilst the Bishop (to my thinking entirely consistent in his argument compared to the Rev. Cumming) is as inconsistent in the social scale of view as he can well be. Money, money, root of all evil, here does its work. The man has the ability to write; he conceives a notion that he can confute a dogma, and gain reputation and money thereby, and he succeeds thoroughly; but is he as conscientious in his proceeding as he is in his argument? Upon the face of things we must say no; but then again we must argue with Hamlet, "Look here, upon this picture, and on this;" Bishop Colenso is undoubtedly a worldly man, an ingenious man, and, like many others, fond of turning his talents to the best money-market he can. The question then arises, can we expect him (with these natural worldly propensities) to throw the chief part of his capital away, which is his title of Bishop. Writing as he has, throwing a doubt upon a part of the Bible, has created an universal curiosity, consequently an extensive sale for his work, and as we are told he contemplates writing other works, he, as a worldly individual, will retain his see as long as he can, seeing that money is to be made out of it, for it is a mere farce to imagine that he has any sympathy with Christianity at all; I would not believe him were he to declare it. Cumming says that Colenso's book is "one of those strange phenomena in God's providential government of the Church and of the world, which issue in greater glory to God, in good to His Church, vindication of His Word, and eventual benefit to thousands of mankind." I am afraid this remark of Cumming's is as insincere as is Colenso's Christian faith,



for if Colenso's work is more damnifying to himself than it is convincing to the community (for this is Cumming's meaning), he (Cumming) need not be in such a state of trepidation as regards the consequences, as he is, or professes to be. He says that the scripture "will stand in clearer, sharper, and more tangible relief." I think that if many people who have read Colenso's consistent argument were to tell Cumming their real thinking, he'd find that the relief is an almost entire relief from all allegiance to the dogmas connected with the Deluge. Then says Cumming "that the difficulties which beset a narrative are not proofs that the narrative is untrue." Now, I think that a narrative, if true, has no occasion whatever to show any difficulty in its construction, particularly, if it really be a narrative directed by the Word of God. My notion is that God is too just to have designedly created such difficulties. Some people might answer me by saying that the difficulty exists in people's comprehension, and the natural reply to such is, well may those difficulties of comprehension exist amongst people who have the moral courage to think for themselves. Of course those who are called "true believers" are the many who are easily led by the dogma that they must believe *all or none*, truly, then, fear steps in and makes them say they *believe all*, whilst in fact few of the number know what they believe, they are mystified, and not unfrequently deluded. Then Cumming's comparisons about Bishop Whately's essay respecting the non-existence of Napoleon Bonaparte is frivolous and unmeaning altogether, and he goes on to say that he himself can conjure up such difficulties that he can prove that there never was such a person as Moses, that there

is not such a man as Bishop Colenso, and that if there be, he certainly is not the man who wrote the book so much in question. What trash is all this; how "lame and impotent" are such conclusions. The fact is, Colenso is too strong for Cumming, and Cumming feels it, so he tries to amuse his audience instead of edifying them. Cumming says that if the Pentateuch is not a true history, Ezekiel, Paul, Peter, and John, were all deceived, or they were deceivers. Upon this point I will not dilate, but leave all who will take the trouble to investigate for themselves to come to their own conclusion, whether it was so or not, or whether they were both deceived and deceivers. Again, says Cumming, that Christ said the writings of Moses were sufficient to lead people to heaven; my opinion is that the true meaning of this is that the Commandments, attributed to Moses, are so sublime in precept and principle, that he who observes them all strictly, and conscientiously, is as certain to attain to future bliss as the most straight-laced stiff-necked sanctimonious biped that crawls the earth's surface; and I may add more so. Cumming further quotes, "If they believe not Moses and the prophets, neither would they repent if one were to rise from the dead." The ancients were great conjurors, wherefore then might they not have practised their arts upon the deluded and superstitious million. If Professor Pepper were now in a land of plenty, amongst a nation of semi-barbarians, and desired to hold power over them, how very easily he could practice upon their credulity; and when men quote such nonsensical delusiveness as Cumming does, I begin to think it ariseth out of a desire to intimidate and subdue. Then Cumming adds, that "if the Saviour was not a perfect

Prophet, he was not the perfect priest, he was not the perfect sacrifice." That he was a sacrifice there is little doubt, that he was an excellent priest I fully believe; but I doubt his prophecies, excepting where he tells us there always will be contention in the mind of man. This is natural consequence, and "There needs no ghost to come from the grave to tell us this." Cumming, quotes Colenso, in which he says, that a simple Zulu asked the question, if it was likely that all the beasts, and birds, and creeping things upon the earth, large and small, from hot countries and cold, came by pairs, and entered into the ark, with Noah? And did Noah gather food for them *all*—for the beasts and birds of prey, as well as the rest? To support this idea of things, Cumming argues that nothing was impossible to the Lord, and that through the Lord's influence Noah was able to accomplish the fact and to build the great ship also, although he was neither a shipwright nor a carpenter. I admit the possibility of the Lord's ability and power to do all this or anything he willed, but I am sceptical enough to imagine that if the Lord went directly about such work, he would have transferred Noah and all his host wherever he choosed, without putting him on board ship to accomplish the object. If *all* these creatures were gathered from *all* parts of the world, how were they transported? If in different vessels how many people were employed for the purpose? And why should God have attributed to him so inglorious an act as to employ a number of people (many thousands must have been engaged for the purpose), and then destroy them all "in one fell swoop," excepting eight individuals? I believe that God is too just ever to

set so vile an example to a race of beings he had endowed with reasoning faculties; my firm conviction is, that the various notions as regards Noah are as entirely hypothetical as is the idea that Adam was the first man, and that the origin of the world was only 6,023 years ago. The hypothesis about Adam is now pretty well reduced to a myth; for by the notices I have read of Sir Charles Lyell's work, he has settled this part of the matter; he shows clearly enough that in Denmark traces of a race of people are found who must have been in existence about 16,000 years ago, and in other parts of his work I read that he gives us good reasons to suppose that man was on the face of the globe 30,000 or 40,000 years ago. Colenso, I am certain, thinks as Lyell does, for, in fact, he refers to Lyell's *Elementary Geology*, pp. 197, 198, and in a paragraph quoted by Cumming, he most conscientiously says, that he dares not to urge his brother man to believe that which he himself is sure is untrue. The most amusing part of the pamphlet is the reply to this by Cumming, he tells a tale about a lady going to Rome to convert the Pope, but, poor lady, says he, she was converted herself, and she came back a bigoted Roman Catholic. A smutty kitchen utensil once, they say, called a kettle ugly names; I am afraid Cumming calling this poor lady bigoted, is very much like the pot beginning with the kettle, and he ought at least to leave such a word as "bigoted" out of the vocabulary of his discourses, unless he desires to identify himself with the appellation. Then we have another particularly amusing notion of Cumming's, finding fault with Colenso, he says that "the Zulu forgot to ask, and that Colenso

forgot to tell him that there was very little difference in the climates of the globe prior to the flood." Cumming, by this notion, seems to be a disciple of Burnet, who tells us that the earth was a flat sheet with its entire surface towards the sun. I thought this nonsense was exploded long since; and if Mr. Cumming gets on, in such a speculative style of reasoning, he may rely upon it, his name will not be handed down to posterity with much more *eclat* than Burnet's is. We look upon Burnet as a curiosity, what are we to contemplate Cumming is coming to? Is it the original curiosity, that you must believe *all or none*, for such is evidently the groundwork of Cumming's argument, and it is clear he is capable of no contention unless he reverts to it. Well may Colenso say, I cannot argue with a man who knows not how to discuss an argument fairly. In trying to excuse the Zulu, through simplicity and deficiency of education, for asking what he, Cumming, considers silly questions, Cumming condemns the Bishop for not telling him that everything was possible, for it was God who prepared the flood. How could Colenso tell the Zulu this, whilst he, Colenso, disputed the flood having taken place at all. Some have said that the flood attributed to the Noachian period was only a partial deluge; but even this Colenso questions, wherefore then is it possible for him to argue with a man who insists that it did transpire exactly in the manner as stated in Genesis. The Zulu's questions were far more pertinent than Cumming's remarks are; the Zulu did not dispute the power of God, therefore Colenso had no occasion to set him right upon such an assumption of Cumming's. The intelligent Zulu merely asked



the Bishop how it was possible for Noah, with his seven followers, to collect animals from all parts of the world, and provide food for them all within the ark? Colenso does not dispute the power of God, he merely questions the statements that God spake with Noah, and the Deluge having taken place; and to conclude this part of his theory, Cumming says, "We must recollect the whole of Genesis is the narrative of a special supernatural economy." Then he goes on quoting the Bible, "God spake to Noah;" "God shut him in;" "Noah walked with God, and God with Noah." He does not tell us if they went arm-in-arm, or if they were both of a similar stature, for since he believes man is made in God's image, he must be picturing this blasphemy to his own mind. Who, then, with the power of reflection about them, can place faith in such arguments as advanced by Cumming; it is, to my thinking, downright sacrilege to reduce the Deity to such an ignominious position, and I solemnly believe that our afflictions come upon us through such like abominations. Then, to wind up, Cumming disguises his own theory by cunning and duplicity, for, says he, (trying to prove that the ark was large enough for all purposes) "the *distinct species* of four-footed animals can be reduced to a comparatively small number." What does he mean by this? Does he presume to insinuate that the various tribes of various species have been bred from the original stock-pairs collected to Noah's menagerie? He evidently means this, and meaning so, he subverts his own argument. He does not think it was necessary to preserve the insect species at all, and mammalia of the whale species were not amongst the collection because they could still exist within their



own element, the water, and so he says the ship was big enough for all purposes; and because Colenso says it was too small, Cumming says that Bishop Wilkins said it was too large. Which of the two bishops, says he, am I to believe, and (admitting that Colenso is unquestionably one of the ablest mathematicians and arithmeticians of the day) he adds that the Bishop has "miscalculated." This is a rare exemplification of logic, if ever there was one, and is entirely characteristic of the weakness of the individual advancing it. Then Cumming, facetiously, asks his audience if they would "extinguish" such a fact as an universal deluge. Look, says he, see the facts preserved before us in various shapes. Facts of a deluge having taken place are abundant, not of one deluge only, but (as I think) several partial deluges at various periods of the world's creation. Cumming cites as authorities that such a catastrophe did occur, a Sanchoniathon. a Phœnician. Berosus. a Chaldean. Lucian. a Pagan. and Plutarch, the historian. The latter, he tells us, called Noah Deucalion, and says that he "sent out a bird on his voyage as it drew near to a close." These men, doubtless, were alluding to a family of persons who had taken refuge in a vessel from a flood which had taken place through the over-flowing of the Nile, and were ultimately saved when the waters subsided, but there exists (and always did) so much speculation upon the fact, who this individual really was, that (as I have told you in a previous lecture) some have called him Noah, others Danaus, Phoroneus, Apis, Inachus, Zeuth, Prometheus, Osiris, Sous, &c., &c. The name is also rendered in a variety of ways, and, not unfrequently, applied to quite different individuals. We find all the

following names applied to Noah : Da-Nau, Da-Nauos, Da-Nauvas, Da-Naubus ; and as we have Dagon described as a sea-animal, endowed with so much reason that he twice preached a sermon to mankind upon righteousness and truth, may not the one story be the tag-end of the other, particularly as Dagon is the same as Osiris. It is rather an unhappy quotation on the part of Cumming, citing Plutarch to strengthen his own reasoning, for Plutarch believed that the flood, alluded to as an universal deluge, was only the overflowing of the Nile, and quite partial. I believe Plutarch ; and come what may, Mr. Cumming will not alter my convictions. The simple fact is, that if the story, as stated, about an universal deluge be correct, the nature of all living things must have suddenly become subdued, and voluntarily subservient to the will of man, which is as inconsistent as improbable. Cumming takes a great deal of trouble to show, by quoting various authorities, that the earth has been flooded, and he advances an opinion, asserted by others, that the hills and valleys have been formed by great rushes of water striking against solid masses of rock and splitting them. Some have said that loose rolling boulders, rocks, and icebergs have done this. Let us, for argument sake, illustrate this delusion. A fearful rolling sea, such as no person living has ever seen, carrying with it masses of loose rocks, icebergs, &c., striking them against, say Dover Cliffs, would they continue to strike, one after another at the same spot ? If so, they would undoubtedly do damage by breaking down some of the cliff, but the *débris* and the boulders would almost as quickly choke up the opening made ; then again if the boulders were to strike against

the whole area of the cliffs, they would beat it down, making it rugged, and leaving but occasional bays. It is absurd to imagine that such a continuous beating, in one spot, could form fissures into the interior of the land, so as to create two ridges of hills for miles and miles. To me these formations appear to have been occasioned by internal upheaving, or volcanic eruptions. Doubtless but many, if not all of the great valleys so formed, have, at one period or other, been inundated, and as the surface of the earth is always more or less shifting, the waters have subsided from the valleys into the deeper channels, the seas and great rivers. We are aware that rivers, lakes, and even seas, are some of them upon much higher levels than others; for instance, is it not certain that the Caspian Sea is upon a lower level than either the Mediterranean or the Black Sea? Are they not separated by the Caucasian Mountains, and might they not at one period have been connected? What, then, could have occasioned such features upon the globe's surface but an internal eruption? It is quite probable that some small streams have been created by gradual inlets from the coast, or from large rivers, and a constant wash of the tides gradually displacing the soil, but this has never occurred to that magnitude as to form the great ridges of hills and mountains as some people suppose; nor do I imagine that they have all been formed at the same period, in fact, these ideas have been amply established ages since; and a great mistake occurs through people's timidity to look narrowly into the question, for even in this present enlightened age, millions of people fear to investigate the question, lest it should disturb their religious notions. To my thinking, this is a moral

cowardism, allied closely to stupidity, and proves at once the incorrectness of a dogged superstition, existing to a much greater extent than appears upon the surface of things.

“ Vain men : to deem this speck the only care  
 “ Of wise Onnipotence. Planets around  
 “ May also in his endless goodness share—  
 “ In many forms of sentient life abound.  
 “ Such is, at least, a rational belief,  
 “ And observation gives it valid force—  
 “ Such to examine is a step in chief  
 “ To raise our worship to its highest source :  
 “ For glowing intellect can ne’er be found  
 “ Better employ’d, than in this course profound.”\*

In concluding this article, let me point out the perversity of Cumming’s argument ; he admits that some geologists (amongst them Sir Charles Lyell) have argued ingeniously, that they think that the valleys, such as those in Devonshire, have been excavated not by the violent rush of some such universal deluge as that which is recorded in the Mosaic history, but by rivers that have gradually subsided and dried up. Here it is evident that greater philosophers than myself think as I do, and I may be permitted to remark that I have not read Sir Charles Lyell’s works (that treat, I hope, is yet in store for me), nor had I read this last quotation of Cumming’s, until after I had written the previous parts of my Lecture. Cumming concludes by asserting that Dr. Wiseman is the better authority, who differs in opinion with Sir Charles Lyell and the rest, truly may we add the old adage, “ Convince a man against his will, &c., &c.” Finally, Cumming says,

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\* The above lines are by the talented *Admiral Smyth*.

that he thinks with M. Deluc, "that if there be anything demonstrated in geology, it is this—that the surface of our globe has been the victim of a great and sudden revolution, of which the date cannot be much more than 5,000 years ago." According to this, he thinks it may be a little over 5,000 years since the universal deluge took place; what then becomes of his assertion, that it did transpire according to the data of the Jews, for they, none of them, carry the circumstance alluded to further back than 2,504 B.C., viz., 4,367 years from the present period, 1863.

I now return to the ever-memorable and renowned poet and father of tragedy, Æschylus; Schlegel calls him the Phidias of tragedy, and he explains to us, that his reason for making this comparison, is because he alludes to Æschylus's "style" of writing; therefore, we must receive it in the sense as if he were a sculptor, or as if he (Schlegel) were alluding to Æschylus in a statuary sense. Just as if the word "style" is only applicable to sculpture, so Schlegel uses the word, therefore he compares Æschylus to Phidias. Schlegel says, "that Phidias formed sublime images of the gods, but lent them an extrinsic magnificence of material, and surrounded their majestic repose with images of the most violent struggles in strong reliefs." What he means by extrinsic magnificence is, I suppose, alluding to the statue of Minerva, which was made of gold and ivory by Phidias, and placed in the Pantheon at Athens. I expect his meaning was in using the term "extrinsic" that the atmosphere had no effect upon the materials used, gold and ivory; but what he means by surrounding "their majestic repose with images of the most violent struggles in strong relief," I confess I cannot compre-



hend, nor can I meet with any one else who does; he tells us that Æschylus “abounds in harsh compounds and over-strained epithets,” yet “he resembles Dante and Shakspeare,” for he threw into his characters a “terrific grace.” What does he mean by a “terrific grace?” is he picturing to himself a neatly attired Fury or demon, or is he meaning a lofty grandeur and misnaming his meaning, by calling it a “terrific grace.” I certainly cannot make out Schlegel’s extravagant expression to mean anything else. If he means as I use the term, I agree with him. for Æschylus is both lofty and grand; this I have mentioned before, and I think I have treated upon most points that are advanced by Schlegel, if not in so elaborate a style, at least more lucid, and I think calculated to be more easily comprehended by general readers. The three Tragedies I am now going to take in hand are what is termed a trilogy, they are *Agamemnon* the *Choephoræ* and the *Furies*; the subject these plays comprehend I have already lectured upon, as treated by Euripides; you shall now see the manner in which Æschylus treats them; but before I commence, I will inform you of the number of Editions of Æschylus’s works that are known of in existence. I have already furnished you with lists of Euripides’ and Sophocles’ works, therefore when I have added this of Æschylus’s works, it may, perhaps, be considered that I have also written a trilogy of catalogues of the Plays of the three authors here in question. I now proceed:—

ALDI. Venet, 8vo., published in 1518, in Greek. Morhof condemns this in the following expressions:—  
*corruptissimam esse illam editionem omnes uno ore testantur.*

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TURNEBUS, a Greek edition, by this scholar, published at Paris in the year 1552, Turner has taken for his guide to correct the foregoing the *Aldine* edition, and the manuscript of Æmarius Ranconetus. This is a showy and expensively got-up work but in parts it is very deficient; for instance, we find it is alluded to by Dr. Harwood (who specifies the exact verses which are left out); the Agamemnon, says he, is deficient no less than 1,275 verses from 320 to 1,075 and from 1,163 to the end. Victorius supplied this defect from the Roman MSS.

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ROBERTELLI, a Greek edition, Venet. 8vo. 1552. De Bure speaks disparagingly of this work, but Harles praises it in the following sentence: *Robertelli, critici acuti, merita sunt insignia.*

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VICTORII, published an edition at Paris, in the Greek language in the year 1557. This work is much praised, particularly by H. Stephens, who superintended the printing, corrected from Italian manuscript. Maittaire, also speaks in praise of the work, both as regards Victorius' and Stephens' researches.

In the year 1580, a Greek edition was published at Antwerp, 12mo., edited by Canter, and printed by Plantin, a much-admired edition, and remarked upon by Fabricus, as follows: *non tantum plura longe menda sublata sunt, sed et carminum ratio primum perspicue explicata habetur.*

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Thomas Stanley, who was a son-in-law of Sir James

Engan, very soon showed his great talents, but he unfortunately died at an early age (somewhere about 30;) amongst his productions was a very fine edition of Æschylus's works, published in London, 1663, in both the Greek and Latin languages; some of the copies now in existence bear date 1664, but in other respects they are precisely the same as those dated 1663. My belief is, that a few impressions were struck off at a time, and that when the following year arrived, those which were then printed, the figure 3 was taken out of the type, and a 4 substituted, for it is merely a continuation of the same edition.

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In 1745, PAUWII published an edition in Greek and Latin; the following year an edition appeared at Glasgow, FOULIS, 4to. et 12mo.

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The celebrated edition by Schütz, appeared twice, published at Amsterdam in 1779 and 1782-3; besides these, a second volume (only) was published in the year 1801, at Halle. Of this work it has been said, *Igitur subductis omnibus rationibus, hanc editionem omnium utilissimam judicamus ad facilem accuratamque tragici intelligentiam.*

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In the year 1795, Porson's first edition appeared at Glasgow in the Greek language. This Cambridge Professor had lent his manuscript to a friend, who used it for his own purposes, for the work appeared printed by Foulis, without either Porson's consent or knowledge. Two volumes of this work are traced to a catalogue published by Evans in the year 1800, lotted

or numbered 202 and 203. In the year 1795, this work was published so clandestinely, that the Professor published his second octavo edition himself.

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At Leipsic, in the year 1805, an edition was published, BOTHII, 8vo. in Greek and Latin. Of this work, the author, *Bothe*, says, *tum usui studiosæ juventutis inserviret, tum elegantiores homines, qui moles librorum refugere solent, alliceret.* The work is not held in very high estimation, but the author is spoken of generally as a very benevolent and amiable man. Since this period, many selections and single plays of *Æschylus* have been published, but no entire edition, at all events, none of note or importance, excepting by *Potter*.

Now, my friends, as I suppose you have listened long enough to the foregoing dry part of my lecture, I will endeavour to amuse you with the more potent part of my discourse, by at once proceeding with the tragedy of *Agamemnon*, in which the following characters appear: *Agamemnon*, *Clytemnestra*, *Cassandra*, *Ægisthus*, a Herald, a Watchman, and the Chorus, consisting of the argive senators. The scene is laid at Argos before the palace of *Agamemnon*, *Clytemnestra* having set a general watch round Argos to signal from hill to hill, by means of watch fires, *Agamemnon's* return towards his palace. The scene opens, showing a sentinel at his duty, for this purpose, stationed on the roof of the palace, soliloquising, he says, that he is kept like a dog watching the approach of his master. I wail, says he, the state of *Agamemnon's* household, which is not of that regular and sedate order it was

formerly; then perceiving a fire kindled upon a neighbouring hill, he exclaims—

“Hail, thou auspicious flame,”

to the queen I’ll quickly announce the signal; now I shall be relieved from this tedious duty of watching from day to day without cessation. “I watch the live-long year,” says the sentinel, not that he has been watching for “ten long years exposed to the cold dews of night,” as stated by Schlegel. It is not likely nor reasonable that Clytemnestra would set the watch in question immediately on Agamemnon’s departure, which occurred ten years previous to his return; besides which, she herself was away from Argos for a time, when she went to meet her husband at Aulis, where he told her he would be absent a considerable time, and that their communications would be few and far between, so that the proper construction to put upon the passage is as it is clearly expressed—

“I watch the live-long year,”

which simply means that this has been his duty for the last twelvemonths. True, the Chorus commences by saying that the tenth year has rolled on, since Agamemnon and Menelaus, the royal brothers, put on their armour and went forth to fight against Troy, but nothing is said about the watch beacons being kept up or prepared for lighting all this time, they allude to past events and to Helena,

“the oft wedded dame”

Well might the Chorus say this, if she really had all the husbands or lovers attributed to her share; first

Theseus, then Menelaus, then Paris, afterwards his brother Deiphobus, and very probably Theoclymenus, then again Menelaus, and after she was dead she was united to Achilles, in the island of Leuce. Besides all these husbands or paramours, she had for admirers Ulysses, Antilochus, Sthenelus, Diomedes, Amphilochus, Meges, Agapenor, Thalpius, Mnestheus, Schedius, Polyxenus, Amphilochus, son of Amphiaraus, Ascalaphus, Ialmus, Ajax, Eumelus, Polypœtes, Elphenor, Podalyrus, Machaon, Leonteus, Philoctetes, Protesilaus, Eurypilus, Ajax, son of Telamon. Teucer, Patroclus, Thoas, Idomeneus, and Merion. There, ladies, what think you of that list of male acquaintance for one woman? And they were all princes too we are told, so that if the friends of each of them were half as prolific of their gifts as were the maniac enthusiasts here upon the occasion of the landing of the Princess Alexandra, Miss Helen must have had a nice store of jewels and gewgaws, from which she might have spared a few for the benefit of the poor Lancashire operatives, and other starving operated upon and oppressed individuals. But a truce to moralizing, and once again to my work. Here a preparation for sacrifices is observed by the Chorus, who says, what can have transpired that thus Clytemnestra is sending thither the victims to the shrines of the gods? Now a long hymn is sung by the Chorus, the burden of which pertains principally to Diana, and at the end of each verse, the following two lines are repeated,—

“Sound high the strain, the swelling notes prolong  
 “Till conquest listens to the raptur’d song.”

Then the Strophe of the Chorus, who must (by the

elevated language put into his mouth) be considered as one of the most enlightened of the senators, offers up a kind of prayer to Jove :—

“STROPHE I.

“ O thou, that sit'st supreme above,  
 “ Whatever name thou deign'st to hear,  
 “ Unblam'd may I pronounce thee Jove !  
 “ Immers'd in deep and holy thought,  
 “ If rightly I conjecture ought,  
 “ Thy pow'r I must revere :  
 “ Else vainly tost the anxious mind  
 “ Nor truth, nor calm repose can find.  
 “ Feeble and helpless to the light  
 “ The proudest of man's race arose,  
 “ Tho' now, exulting in his might,  
 “ Dauntless he rushes on his foes;  
 “ Great as he is, in dust he lies ;  
 “ He meets a greater, and he dies.

“ ANTISTROPHE 1ST.

“ He that, when conquest brightens round,  
 “ Swells the triumphal strain to Jove,  
 “ Shall ever with success be crown'd.  
 “ Yet often, when to wisdom's seat  
 “ Jove deigns to guide man's erring feet,  
 “ His virtues to improve ;  
 “ He to affliction gives command  
 “ To form him with her chast'ning hand :  
 “ The memory of her rigid lore,  
 “ On the sad heart imprinted deep,  
 “ Attends him thro' day's active hour,  
 “ Nor in the night forsakes his sleep.  
 “ Instructed thus thy grace we own,  
 “ O thou, that sit'st on Heav'n's high throne !”

I must not let these beautiful lines pass without remarking upon the evident turn of Æschylus's mind towards the belief in an individual and Almighty Deity.



The whole of this part of the Chorus is sublimely directed to that thought, and is fully expressed at the very beginning :—

“O thou, that sit'st supreme above.”

Yet there are bigoted people in the world who say it is wrong to read these plays because they treat upon mythology. Why, these were the very luminaries (*Æschylus* and *Euripides*) who first opened the people's eyes to the light of truth, for which (when the shade was thoroughly cast off) they were revered and almost worshipped, even down to the present hour. Those who have intellect enough to comprehend these authors, can but wonder, admire, and think with reverence upon the truly noble dust that was thus inspired to enchant and enlighten the peoples of all civilized countries, and for all ages. This strain of thought continues until *Strophe 2nd* commences, here a marked difference is discernible, which appears as if the poet saw the danger of divesting his writings of the general mythological doctrines of the age; so *Strophe 2nd* begins to talk of prophecies, prognostications, presentiments, and human sacrifices, until *Iphigenia* is doomed and dies.

“STROPHE 2ND.

“When now in *Aulis*' rolling bay

“His course the reflux\* floods refus'd,

\* This extraordinary race of people were so infatuated with superstition that their soothsayers were at once objects of fear, hatred, and veneration. The meaning of the passage, from the first word of the verse down to the end of the line, finishing with the words “surging

" And sick'ning with inaction lay  
 " In dead repose th' exhausted train,  
 " Did the firm chief of chance complain ?  
     " No prophet he accus'd ;  
 " His eyes towards Chalcis bent he stood,  
 " And silent mark'd the surging flood.  
 " Sullen the winds from Strymon sweep,  
     " Mischance and famine in the blast,  
 " Ceaseless torment the angry deep,  
     " The cordage rend, the vessels waste,  
 " With tedious and severe delay  
 " Wear the fresh flow'r of Greece away.

flood," means that the tide continued to flow in the opposite direction to which the fleet desired to sail. Did Agamemnon (says the Chorus) complain? Did he accuse any of the soothsayers of being the cause of the mischief? No; he merely glanced silently and patiently at the sea towards "Chalcis." I am inclined to think the poet meant to allude to the winds, not to the tide; for the mere turn of a tide could not have been of so much importance to the fleet as to occasion the necessity of the sacrifice of a human life. The words "refluent floods" certainly applies to the water flowing backwards; but are we, therefore, to construe the meaning that the tide was constantly flowing backwards in one direction, thereby occasioning a miraculous impediment to the armed hosts proceeding to their destination? If so, we can understand it; otherwise we ought to look to the contrary winds as being the cause of the delay; but the next verse commences by telling us that the winds are "sullen;" which means that no wind at all is stirring. Then it goes on stating that "mischance and famine is in the blast." How can this be? it is a direct contradiction. If no wind was stirring how could blasts be said to be bringing famine with them? Is not the first word of this verse wrongly spelt? Should it not be sudden instead of "sullen?" If so, we have some sense in the verses conjunctively. The winds are sudden, and as often as the tide turns one way, just as frequently does the wind change in the opposite direction; and when it flows from the direction of the river Strymon it brings with it hot blasts from the interior of the country; or it may mean that, if these contrary winds continue, we shall be detained here at Aulis until we are short of provisions, and famine will ensue amongst us in consequence. I am quite of opinion that for the word *sullen* we ought to read *sudden*. "Chalcis" is now called Egribo; it is the chief city in Eubœa. There was a town of the same name in the Acarnanian country, one also in Sicily, likewise one in Thrace.

## "ANTISTROPHE 2ND.

"When in Diana's name, the Seer  
 "Pronounc'd the dreadfull remedy  
 "More than the stormy sea severe,\*  
 "Each chieftain stood in grief profound,  
 "And smote his sceptre on the ground :  
 "Then with a rising sigh  
 "The monarch, whilst the big tears roll,  
 "Express'd the anguish of his soul ;  
 "'Dreadfull the sentence : not t' obey,  
 "'Vengeance and ruin close us round :  
 "'Shall then the sire his daughter slay,  
 "'In youth's fresh bloom with beauty crown'd ?  
 "'Shall on these hands her warm blood flow ?  
 "Cruel alternative of woe !

## "STROPHE 3RD.

"'This royal fleet, this martial host,  
 "'The cause of Greece, shall I betray,  
 "'The monarch in the father lost ?  
 "'To calm these winds, to smoothe this flood,  
 "'Diana's wrath a virgin's blood  
 "'Demands : 'tis our's t' obey.'  
 "Bound in necessity's iron chain  
 "Reluctant nature strives in vain :  
 "Impure, unholy thoughts succeed,  
 "And dark'ning o'er his bosom roll ;  
 "Whilst madness prompts the ruthless deed,  
 "Tyrant of the misguided soul :

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\* *More than the stormy sea severe.* When the prophet proclaimed the decree the chiefs were more *agitated than the surging sea*. The first six lines of this speech are quoted as having been said by Agamemnon ; the speech is then taken up by the Chorus. They say that Agamemnon looked sternly on the fleet, then yielded to circumstances, and consented to sacrifice his daughter, for the benefit of the cause in hand, to Greece generally ; but the line "Tyrant of the misguided soul," is one of Æschylus's slurs upon the religious faith of his country. The meaning is that Agamemnon became a tyrant through a misguided belief.

" Stern on the fleet he rolls his eyes,  
 " And dooms the hatefull sacrifice.

" ANTISTROPHE 3RD.

" Arm'd in a woman's cause, around  
 " Fierce for the war the princes rose ;  
 " No place affrighted pity found.  
 " In vain the virgin's streaming tear,  
 " Her cries in vain, her pleading pray'r,  
 " Her agonizing woes.  
 " Cou'd the fond father hear unmov'd ?  
 " The Fates decreed : the king approv'd :  
 " Then to th' attendants gave command  
 " Decent her flowing robes to bind ;  
 " Prone on the altar with strong hand  
 " To place her, like a spotless hind ;  
 " And check her sweet voice, that no sound  
 " Unhallow'd might the rites confound.

" EPODE.

" Rent on the earth her maiden veil she throws,  
 " That emulates the rose ; \*  
 " And on the sad attendants rolling  
 " The trembling lustre of her dewy eyes,  
 " Their grief-empassion'd souls controlling,  
 " That ennobled, modest grace,  
 " Which the mimic pencil tries  
 " In the imag'd form to trace,  
 " The breathing picture shows :  
 " And as, amidst his festal pleasures,  
 " Her father oft rejoic'd to hear  
 " Her voice in soft mellifluous measures  
 " Warble the sprightly—fansied air ;  
 " So now in act to speak the virgin stands :  
 " But when the third libation paid,  
 " She heard her father's dread commands

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\* It was the custom for maidens to keep their faces covered with a veil, thereby indicating their virgin chastity ; the rose being alluded to as emblematical of purity.

" Injoining silence, she obey'd :  
 " And for her country's good,  
 " With patient, meek, submissive mind  
 " To her hard fate resign'd,  
 " Pour'd out the rich stream of her blood."

" What since hath past I know not, nor relate ;  
 " But never did the prophet speak in vain,  
 " Th' afflicted, anxious for his future fate,  
 " Looks forward, and with hope relieves his pain.

" But since th' inevitable ill will come,  
 " Much knowledge to much misery is allied ;  
 " Why strive we then t' anticipate the doom,  
 " Which happiness and wisdom wish to hide ?

" Yet let this carefull, age-enfeebled band  
 " Breath from our inmost soul one ardent vow,  
 " Now the sole guardians of this Apian\* land,  
 " " May fair success with glory bind her brow ! " "

Clytemnestra now enters, whom the Chorus addresses with respect and reverence ; in reply to them she says she has joyous news to inform them of : Troy has fallen says she. This astonishes the Chorus, for they are not acquainted with the plan Clytemnestra has adopted to get the news conveyed to her, viz., by means of the beacon fires. The Watchman has informed her of the signal, but it seems that he has kept the secret of his post for the whole year he was placed on the watch ; so also must all the other watchmen have kept the secret (for there must have been many watching), considering that we are to understand that they were placed at different intervals all the way

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\* *Peloponnesus*. The name the country had been known by, was *Apia*, derived from *Apis*, a son of Phoroneus and Laodice.

from Argos to the seat of the war. The Chorus asks her if she may not be deceived, and if she is not dwelling upon some dream she has had; to which she replies that dreams do not visit her, for they are

“Sport of the slumbering soul : they move not me.”

Have you been betrayed into the belief that Troy has fallen through some rumour? says the Chorus. To which Clytemnestra disdainingly replies,

“As a raw girl’s, thou hold’st my judgement cheap.”\*

And she developes her boldness of character in the following spirited and well-devised speech :—

“The fire, that from the height of Ida sent  
 “Its streaming light, as from th’ announcing flame  
 “Torch blaz’d to torch. First Ida to the steep  
 “Of Lemnos ;† Atho’s‡ sacred height receiv’d  
 “The mighty splendor ; o’er the surging back  
 “Of th’ Hellespont§ the vig’rous blaze held on  
 “Its smiling way, and like the orient sun  
 “Illumes with golden-gleaming rays the head  
 “Of rocky Marcetas ;|| nor lingers there,  
 “Nor winks unheedfull, but its warning flames

\* You estimate my judgment as you would an inexperienced, uneducated girl.

† The mountains of Lemnos. An island in the Ægean Sea. Here it was that the descendants of Pelagus brought a number of Athenian women under the pretence of marrying them ; they used them for a time, and after many children were born they [the children] were all massacred by the mutual consent of their fathers.

‡ Athos, known as *Monte Santo*, a projecting mountainous district into the Ægean Sea.

§ The Hellespont was named after Helle, who fell from the ram’s back (which was carrying her and her brother Phryxus through the air) and was drowned here. The Hellespont, or Hellespontus, is correctly known as the Dardanelles, which divides Europe and Asia.

|| Crete.



"Darts to the streams of Euripus, and gives  
 "Its glitt'ring signal to the guards that hold  
 "Their high watch on Mesapius.\* These enkindle  
 "The joy-denouncing fires, that spread the blaze  
 "To where Erica† hoar its shaggy brow  
 "Waves rudely. Unimpair'd the active flame  
 "Bounds o'er the level of Asopus,‡ like  
 "The jocund moon, and on Cithæron's§ steep  
 "Wakes a successive flame; the distant watch  
 "Agnize|| its shrine, and raise a brighter fire,  
 "That o'er the lake Gorgopis¶ streaming holds  
 "Its rapid course, and on the mountainous heights  
 "Of Ægiplanctus\*\* huge, swift-shooting spreads  
 "The lengthen'd line of light. Thence onwards waves  
 "Its fiery tresses, eager to ascend  
 "The crags of Prone,†† frowning in their pride  
 "O'er the Sardonic gulf:‡‡ it leaps, it mounts  
 "The summit of Arachne,§§ whose high head  
 "Looks down on Argos: to this royal seat  
 "Thence darts the light that from th' Idean||| fire

\* Bœtia.

† Now called Alicuda.

‡ The plains, which are very fertile, in the valley of the Asopus, in Bœtia. This river joins the Euripus.

§ A mountain in Bœtia, named after king Cithæron. Here it was that Hercules fought with a lion and slew it.

|| The watchman located on the Cithæron mountain, knowing the meaning of the fire being kindled in the vale of Asopus, has lighted a larger fire, which is seen across the lake Gorgopis by the watchman located on Mount Ægiplanctus.

¶ A lake named after Gargopliene, one of the Danaides; it is situate in Scythia. Æschylus treats this lake as being named after the sisters Gorgones, whom Perseus found near here and slew, *vide* the Gorgones; or more correctly, alluding to Medusa, whose head only he took off and presented it to Minerva.

\*\* A mountain in Galatia.

†† The shores of the Propontis.

‡‡ In Sardinia, formerly known as *Risus Sardonicus*.

§§ In Thessaly.

||| The fire lighted by the first watch on Mount Ida, near to Tros or Troy.

"Derives its birth. Rightly in order thus  
 "Each to the next consigns the torch, and fills  
 "The bright succession, whilst the first in speed  
 "Vies with the last : the promis'd signal\* this  
 "Giv'n by my lord t' announce the fall of Troy.  
 "This day the conquering Greeks are lords of Troy.  
 "Methinks I hear the various clamours rise  
 "Discordant thro' the city. Pour thou oil  
 "In the same vase and vinegar,† in vain

\* This is a falsehood on the part of Clytemnestra ; for no arrangement had been made with Agamemnon to light these fires ; she contrived them herself, in conjunction with Ægisthus, with a view of preparing themselves to disguise their unlawful proceeding.

† This is merely a distinction made by Clytemnestra of the different opinions that will be expressed by the Grecians and the Trojans concerning the justification for the war that has ensued between them. Here follows a description of the horrors of war, which are expressed in a tone of exultation. Similar expressions have in all ages been made, yet wars will ensue in spite of a more humane proposition for international arbitrations. This notion has been ridiculed by many, which, to my thinking, only proves the short-sightedness of the majority ; for the time will come when such an universal war will ensue that it will only be put an end to by an unanimous truce, and end in a system of mutual reference. Those nations which are last to join in the compact will be compelled, and for a certain period (at least) peace will reign upon the face of God's earth ; then will the scoffers' voices be heard to fawn, for they who are for bloodletting shall lick the dust that they have contaminated ; then all the female races of mankind shall of one accord unite to heal the deadly wounds that the slaughtering hands of monarchical tyrannies have created ; then all shall be one sisterhood of mercy, like that of the good Florence Nightingale and her amiable female friends, who rendered so much good service at the time of the Crimean war. Perhaps, as I am now referring to Miss Nightingale, it may not be considered out of place my reciting to you a few lines I wrote upon the occasion alluded to :—

'Twas a sad and mournful sight,  
 As on the cold and bloodstain'd earth,  
 A soldier fest'ring in his wounds that night,  
 Lay unmourn'd gasping for breath ;  
 Unmourn'd say I—no not quite unmourn'd !  
 One Godlike spirit hears the soldier's wail,  
 Through the wild elements around

"Wou'dst thou persuade th' unsocial streams to mix :  
 "The captives' and the conqueror's voice distinct,  
 "Marks of their different fortune, may'st thou hear :  
 "Those rolling on the bodies of the slain,  
 "Friends, husbands, brothers, fathers ; the weak arms  
 "Of children clasp'd around the bleeding limbs  
 "Of hoary age ; lament their fall, their necks  
 "Bent to the yoke of slavery : Eager these  
 "From the fierce toils of war, who thro' the gloom  
 "Of night rang'd wide, fly on the spoils, as chance  
 "Not order, leads them ; in the Trojan houses,  
 "Won by their spears, they walk at large, reliev'd  
 "From the cold dews dropt from the unshelter'd sky ;  
 "And at th' approach of eve, like those whose pow'r  
 "Commands security, the easy night  
 "Shall sleep unguarded. If with hallow'd rites  
 "They venerate the Gods that o'er the city,  
 "With those that o'er the vanquish'd country rule,  
 "And reverence their shrines, the conquering troops.  
 "Shall not be conquer'd. May no base desire,  
 "No guilty wish urge them, enthrall'd to gain,  
 "To break thro' sacred laws. Behoves them now,  
 "With safety in their train, backward to plow  
 "The reflux wave. Shou'd they return expos'd  
 "To th' anger of the Gods, vengeance wou'd wake  
 "To seize its prey, might they perchance escape  
 "Life's incidental ills. From me thou hearest  
 "A woman's sentiment : and much I wish,  
 "Their glories by no rude mischance depress'd,  
 "To cull from many blessings the most precious."

At the conclusion of Clytemnestra's speech, the

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She came—'twas Florence Nightingale ;  
 She, with her little band of sisterhood—  
 Tended the wounded man with care,  
 As the celestial angels created good,  
 The gentle and the charitable were there.  
 Hail to thee, dear maids, chosen of thy sex,  
 Emblems of all that is good in reality ;  
 Such deeds as thine are purest soul's reflex,  
 The source of faith, hope, and charity.

Chorus tell her her wisdom is equal to that of a man's, therefore, putting trust in her assertions, they will now return thanks to the gods. Here they sing first a Prosode, then a Strophe, after this an Antistrophe, again a Strophe, and another Antistrophe, after which a Strophe third, an Antistrophe third, and an Epode. The purport of all this singing and reciting is in relation to what you already know the circumstances of what has transpired, so that I need not go through them all again. I will therefore break off here and finish this Lecture, then continue with the part of Clytemnestra.

## LECTURE XXVII.

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“CLYTEMNESTRA.

“Whether these fires, that with successive signals  
“Blaze thro’ the night, be true, or like a dream  
“Play with a sweet delusion on the soul,  
“Soon shall we know. An herald from the shore  
“I see ; branches of olive shade his brows.  
“That cloud of dust, rais’d by his speed, assures me  
“That neither speechless, nor enkindling flames  
“Along the mountains, will he signify  
“His message ; but his tongue shall greet our ears  
“With words of joy : far from my soul the thought  
“Of other, than confirm these fav’ring signals.

*Enter the* HERALD.

HERALD.

“Hail thou paternal soil of Argive earth !  
“In the fair light of the tenth year to thee  
“Return’d, from the sad wreck of many hopes  
“This one I save ; sav’d from despair e’en this ;  
“For never thought I in this honour’d earth  
“To share in death the portion of a tomb.  
“Hail then, lov’d earth ; hail, thou bright sun ; and thou,  
“Great guardian of my country, supreme Jove ;

" For our destruction ; on Scamander's\* banks  
 " Enough we mourn'd thy wrath ; propitious now  
 " Come, king Apollo, our defence. And all  
 " Ye Gods, that o'er the works of war preside,  
 " I now invoke ; thee, Mercury, my avenger,  
 " Rever'd by heralds,† that from thee derive  
 " Their high employ ; you heroes,‡ to the war  
 " That sent us, friendly now receive our troops,  
 " The relicks of the spear. Imperial walls,  
 " Mansion of kings, ye seats rever'd ; ye Gods,§  
 " That to the golden sun before these gates  
 " Present your honour'd forms ; if e'er of old  
 " Those eyes with favour have beheld the king,  
 " Receive him now, after this length of time,  
 " With glory ; for he comes, and with him brings  
 " To you, and all, a light that cheers this gloom :  
 " Then greet him well ; such honour is his meed,  
 " The mighty king, that with the mace|| of Jove  
 " Th' avenger, wherewith he subdues the earth,  
 " Hath level'd with the dust the tow'rs of Troy ;  
 " Their altars are o'erturn'd, their sacred shrines,  
 " And all the race destroy'd. The iron yoke¶  
 " Thou, Pythian king,\*\* thy shafts no longer wing'd

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\* A river in Troas. It is said that the three goddesses, Juno, Venus, and Minerva bathed here for the purpose of giving a bright hue to their hair before they appeared to Paris on the mountain (Ida), at whose base it flows. Virgins, on arriving at a certain age, also bathed here, when they used the following words to denote that they had devoted their chastity to the god who presided over the river :—*Aabe mon, Skamandre teen parthenian.*

† Mercury was supposed to have been herald to Jupiter.

‡ This is a compliment paid to the senators.

§ This is addressed particularly to such statues as are erected to Apollo.

|| It was by the mere waive of the mace, held in the hand of Jove, that it was supposed he commanded the thunder.

¶ It was an occasional custom by these people, and more generally adopted amongst the Romans, to put an iron collar round the necks of their captives, and frequently lead them in procession as spoils of war, whilst the victors rode in triumph in the same procession.

\*\* Apollo.



"Fix'd on the neck of Troy, victorious comes  
 "The great Atrides,\* of all mortal men  
 "Worthy of highest honours. Paris now,  
 "And the perfidious state, shall boast no more  
 "His proud deeds unreveng'd ; stript of his spoils,  
 "The debt of justice for his thefts, his rapines,  
 "Paid amply o'er his father's house to spreads  
 "With twofold† loss the wide-involving ruin.

"CLYTEMNESTRA.

"Joy to thee, herald of the Argive host.  
 "Strong thy affection to thy native soil.  
 "What, hath this sweet infection reach'd e'en you ?‡  
 "The fond desire of those, who equal love—  
 "Such that I oft' have breath'd the secret sigh.

\* This alludes to Agamemnon, as the lineal descendant of the house of Atrides.

† His own death and the destruction of his race, that they cannot again reign in Troy. This is undoubtedly the poet's meaning, by which it would seem that he lost sight of Priam's son, Helenus ; or it may mean that this prince, being taken by Pyrrhus a captive, that he forfeited all right and chance to the throne of Troy. It is very singular that neither of the three great tragedians allude to this circumstance : it is entirely left to conjecture ; particularly as Helenus after a while married Andromache, and became king of Chaonia in Epirus. Respecting his marriage with Andromache, there are two statements extant ; one is that she was given to him by Neoptolemus out of gratitude, for that Helenus had saved Neoptolemus's life ; another statement is that Andromache having been married to Neoptolemus at his death married Helenus from a mutual affection. It must not be forgotten that Andromache had first been married to Hector, who was a brother of Helenus. Pyrrhus and Neoptolemus both appertain to the same person—the son of Achilles.

‡ This is expressed in contempt for Talthybius's origin, who was born a slave, but ultimately freed and made a herald of. According to the then existing laws he could not have occupied this post of trust without either having been born a citizen or made free. Agamemnon freed him, therefore the remark by Clytemnestra is purposely put into her mouth by the poet to show her arrogant disposition.

"Silence I long have held an healing balm.\*  
 "To use thy words, death were a wish'd exchange.†  
 "Long since my voice rais'd high each note of joy,  
 "When thro' the night the streaming blaze first came,  
 "And told us Troy was taken : Not unblam'd  
 "That, as a woman lightly credulous,  
 "I let a mountain fire transport my soul  
 "With the fond hope that Ilion's haughty tow'rs  
 "Were humbled in the dust. At this rebuke  
 "Tho' somewhat shaken, yet I sacrific'd ;  
 "And, as weak women wont, one voice of joy  
 "Awoke another, till the city rang  
 "Thro' all its streets ; and at the hallow'd shrines  
 "Each rais'd the pious strains of gratitude,  
 "And fan'd the altars' incense-breathing flame.  
 "But it is needless to detain thee longer,  
 "Soon from the king's own lips shall I learn all.  
 "How best I may receive my honour'd lord,  
 "And grace his wish'd return, now claims my speed.  
 "Can Heav'n's fair beam show a fond wife a sight  
 "More gratefull than her husband from his wars  
 "Return'd with glory, when she opes the gate,  
 "And springs to welcome him ? Tell my lord this,  
 "That he may hasten his desir'd return :  
 "And tell him he will find his faithfull wife,  
 "Such as he left her, a domestic creature  
 "To him all fondness, to his enemies  
 "Irreconcilable ; and tell him too  
 "That ten long years have not effac'd the seal  
 "Of constancy ; that never knew I pleasure  
 "In the blam'd converse of another man,

---

\* This passage may be interpreted as is written in an old song, "Absence makes the heart grow fonder ;" but the sentiment is sorely contaminated by the breath of the creature who utters it.

† This is said in allusion to the remark made by the herald, "To share in death the portion of a tomb." The "wish'd exchange," alluded to by Clytemnestra, means a preference to find one's tomb in our native country rather than in a strange land.

"More than the virgin metal in the mines  
 "Knows an adulterate and debasing mixture.\*"

[*Exit within the Castle.*]

Here ends one of the most hypocritical speeches in all the plays of the ancients, for Clytemnestra, all this time, is contemplating her husband's death, and although she orders her slaves to prepare the purple tapestries for him to walk upon, she soon makes him bite the dust; when she gets him fairly into her power. After Clytemnestra leaves the stage the Chorus inquires what has become of Menelaus, they are told that his vessel was caught in the storm that raged o'er the Ægean sea, and that no tidings have since been heard of him. Here the Chorus go through a long description of mishaps, occurring through the frailty of women, and then Agamemnon enters and is addressed by the Chorus in the following speech:—

"My royal lord, by whose victorious hand  
 "The tow'rs of Troy are fall'n, illustrious son  
 "Of Atreus, with what words, what reverence  
 "Shall I address thee, not t' o'erleap the bounds  
 "Of modest duty, nor to sink beneath  
 "An honorable welcome? Some there are,  
 "That form themselves to seem, more than to be,  
 "Transgressing honesty: to him that feels  
 "Misfortune's rugged hand, full many' a tongue  
 "Shall drop condolence, tho' th' unfeeling heart  
 "Knows not the touch of sorrow; these again  
 "In fortune's summer gale with the like art  
 "Shall dress in forc'd smiles the unwilling face:

---

\* Here is a proof that even at this remote period of the world's history people knew of the science of alloying and amalgamating metals.

"But him the penetrating eye soon marks,  
 "That in the seemly garb of honest zeal  
 "Attempts to cloath his meagre blandishments."  
 "When first in Helen's cause my royal lord  
 "Levied his host, let me not hide the truth,  
 "Notes, other than of music, echoed wide  
 "In loud complaints from such as deem'd him rash,  
 "And void of reason, by constraint to plant  
 "In breasts averse the martial soul,† that glows  
 "Despising death. But now their eager zeal  
 "Streams friendly to those chiefs, whose prosp'rous valour  
 "Is crown'd with conquest. Soon then shalt thou learn,  
 "As each supports the state, or strives to rend it  
 "With faction, who reveres thy dignity.

"AGAMEMNON.

"To Argos first, and to my country Gods  
 "I bow with reverence, by whose holy guidance  
 "On Troy's proud tow'rs I pour'd their righteous vengeance,  
 "And now revisit safe my native soil.  
 "No loud-tongued pleader heard, they judg'd the cause,  
 "And in the bloody urn,‡ without one vote  
 "Dissentient, cast the lots that fix'd the fate  
 "Of Ilion and its sons: the other vase  
 "Left empty, save of widow'd hope. The smoke  
 "Rolling in dusky wreaths, shows that the town  
 "Is fall'n; the firey storm yet lives, and high  
 "The dying ashes toss rich clouds of wealth  
 "Consum'd. For this behoves us to the Gods

\* How fearfully true is this passage, for it is the greatest curse in man's nature to dissimulate, to flatter the affluent, and to spurn the unfortunate. I do not say that this is universal, but I fear that the bane is nearly so.

† This comma ought to be placed after the next word but one—"glows;" but as I do not alter Potter's text, I leave it as in the original.

‡ The voices of the Grecian warriors were now unanimous for war.

"Render our gratefull thanks,\* and that they spread  
 "The net of fate sweeping with angry ruin.  
 "In beauty's cause the Argive monster† rear'd  
 "Its bulk enormous, th' affrighted town  
 "Portending devastation; in its womb  
 "Hiding its embattled hosts, rush'd furious forth,  
 "About the setting of the Pleiades,‡  
 "And, as a lion rav'ning for his prey,  
 "Ramp'd o'er their walls, and lap'd the blood of kings.  
 "This to the Gods address'd,§ I turn me now  
 "Attentive to thy caution: I approve  
 "Thy just remark, and with my voice confirm it.  
 "Few have the fortitude of soul to honour  
 "A friend's success, without a touch of envy;  
 "For that malignant passion to the heart  
 "Cleaves close, and with a double burden loads  
 "The man infected with it: first he feels  
 "In all their weight his own calamities,  
 "Then sighs to see the happiness of others.  
 "This of my own experience have I learn'd;  
 "And this I know, that many, who in public  
 "Have born the semblance of my firmest friends,  
 "Are but the flatt'ring image of a shadow  
 "Reflected from a mirror: Save Ulysses,  
 "Alone, who, tho' aversè|| to join our arms,

---

\* This most damnable perturbation of soul rules mankind to the present hour; for we, like other nations, invoke the Deity, even in blood guiltiness.

† This is a curious expression, but merely alludes to the enormous number of warriors engaged in the siege of Troy.

‡ The particulars of this constellation I have previously described to you; but now let me tell you that the ancients also applied the term to the seven following poets:—Homerus the younger, Nicander, Lycophron, Aratus, Apollonius, Theocritus, and Philicus. The word is derived from the Greek *pleein*—to sail.

§ Now having addressed my foregoing remarks to the gods I turn attentive to you, my people.

|| Ulysses, when first solicited to join the Greeks in the adventure, feigned insanity; he placed a bull and a horse to a plough and furrowed up the sands upon the sea-shore, where he strewed salt instead of corn; but his deception was discovered by Palamedes, who placed Telemachus,

"Yok'd in his martial harness from my side  
 "Swerv'd not; living\* or dead be this his praise.  
 "But what concerns our kingdom and the Gods,  
 "Holding a general council of the state,  
 "We will consult; that what is well may keep  
 "Its goodness permanent, and what requires  
 "Our healing hand, with mild severity  
 "May be corrected. But my royal roof  
 "Now will I visit, and before its hearths  
 "Offer libations to the Gods, who sent me  
 "To this far distant war, and led me back.  
 "Firm stand the victory that attends our arms.

*Enter CLYTEMNESTRA.*

"Friends, fellow citizens, whose counsils guide  
 "The state of Argos, in your reverend presence  
 "A wife's fond love I blush not to disclose :†  
 "Thus habit softens dread.‡ From my full heart  
 "Will I recount my melancholy life  
 "Thro' the long stay of my lov'd lord at Troy :  
 "For a weak woman, in her husband's absence,  
 "Pensive to sit and lonely in her house,  
 "'Tis dismal, list'ning to each frightfull tale :  
 "First one alarms her, then another comes  
 "Charg'd with worse tidings. Had my poor lord here  
 "Suffer'd as many wounds as common fame

---

the child of Ulysses, before the plough, which induced the father to turn in another direction; being detected he threw aside the deception and joined in the conflict. The great service alluded to by Agamemnon which Ulysses rendered was by his introducing himself into the city of Troy, and stealing therefrom the Palladium. This statue was supposed to have had the charm of protecting the city whilst in its position. It was Helenus who (being threatened with death by Neoptolemus) informed the invaders of the impossibility to subdue Troy so long as the Palladium remained in the city. For this adventure, on the part of Ulysses, the Greeks awarded him the armour which Achilles had worn.

\* The reason Agamemnon makes this remark is, because after the war was over, the ship in which Ulysses sailed was wrecked on the coast of Africa, and it was not known whether he was drowned or not.

† Here she embraces Agamemnon.

‡ Custom and duty permits this in me, who am the wife of this man, even in the presence of other people.



"Reported, like a net he had been pierc'd :  
 "Had he been slain oft' as the loud-tongued rumour  
 "Was nois'd abroad, Geryon's\* triple mail  
 "Must yield the palm to him, were he now living,  
 "For of the dead I speak not, and cou'd boast  
 "His triple form thrice multiplied, to die  
 "In each form singly. Such reports oppress'd me  
 "Till life became distastefull, and my hands  
 "Were prompted oft' to deeds of desperation.  
 "Nor is thy son Orestes, the dear tie  
 "That binds us each to th' other, present here  
 "To aid me, as he ought : nay, marvel not,†  
 "The friendly Strophius with a right strong arm  
 "Protects him in Phocæa ; whilst his care  
 "Saw danger threat me in a double form,  
 "The loss of thee at Troy, the anarchy  
 "That might ensue, shou'd madness drive the people  
 "To deeds of violence, as men are prompt  
 "Insultingly to trample on the fall'n :  
 "Such care dwells not with fraud. At thy return  
 "The gushing fountains of my tears are dried,  
 "Save that my eyes are weak with midnight watchings,  
 "Straining, thro' tears, if haply they might see  
 "Thy‡ signal fires, that claim'd my fix'd attention.  
 "If they were clos'd in sleep, a silly fly  
 "Wou'd with its slightest murmurings, make me start,  
 "And wake me to more fears. For thy dear sake

---

\* Geryones (sometimes spelt Geryon) was a monster with three bodies, therefore, when he wore his armour, he must have had three suits. His parents were Chrysaor and Callirhoe. Chrysaor was the offspring of Neptune and the gorgon Medusa, Callirhoe was a daughter of Oceanus and Tethys ; she also had by Chrysaor the monster Echidna, the dog Orthos, and (according to some) Cerberus ; then again, according to some authors, she was the mother of Chimæra ; but the general notion is that the dog Cerberus and the monster Chimæra were the offsprings of Echidna and Typhon.

† Upon her telling Agamemnon that Orestes is not in Argos, he starts surprised, for he is not aware of the attempt that his wife has made upon his son's life.

‡ This does not mean that Agamemnon ordered the fires to be lighted, but that she did so for his sake, therefore she calls them his fires.

" All this I suffer'd : but my jocund\* heart  
 " Forgets it all, whilst I behold my lord,  
 " My guardian, the strong anchor of my hope,  
 " The stately column that supports my house,  
 " Dear as an only child to a fond parent ;  
 " Welcome as land, which the tost mariner  
 " Beyond his hope descries ; welcome as day  
 " After a night of storms with fairer beams  
 " Returning ; welcome as the liquid lapset  
 " Of fountain to the thirsty traveller :  
 " So pleasant is it to escape the chain  
 " Of hard constrainet Such greeting I esteem  
 " Due to thy honour : let it not offend,  
 " For I have suffer'd much. But, my lov'd lord,  
 " Leave now that car;† nor on the bare ground set  
 " That royal foot, beneath whose mighty tread  
 " Troy trembled. Haste, ye virgins, to whose care  
 " This pleasing office is entrusted, spread  
 " The streets with tapestry ; let the ground be cover'd  
 " With richest purple, leading to the palace ;  
 " That honour with just state may grace his entry,  
 " Tho' unexpected. My attentive care  
 " Shall, if the Gods permit, dispose the rest  
 " To welcome his high glories, as I ought.

" AGAMEMNON

" Daughter of Leda, guardian of my house,  
 " Thy words are correspondent to my absence,  
 " Of no small length. With better grace my praise  
 " Wou'd come from others : Sooth me not with strains  
 " Of adulation, as a girl ; nor raise,  
 " As to some proud barbaric king, that loves  
 " Loud acclamations echoed from the mouths  
 " Of prostrate worshippers ; a clamorous welcome :

---

\* Leaping heart—joyed at his return.

† Draughts.

‡ This has the effect of counteracting the previous part—

" A wife's fond love I blush not to disclose : "

By the one line it would seem that she there and then embraces him ; by the other that she makes a set speech, addressing him whilst he is yet seated in his chariot.

"Nor spread the streets with tapestry; 'tis invidious;  
 "These are the honours we shou'd pay the Gods.  
 "For mortal man to tread on ornaments  
 "Of rich embroid'ry—No: I dare not do it:  
 "Respect me as a man, not as a God.  
 "Why should my foot pollute these vests, that glow  
 "With various tinctur'd radiance? My full fame  
 "Swells high without it; and the temperate rule  
 "Of cool discretion is the choicest gift  
 "Of fav'ring Heav'n. Happy the man, whose life  
 "Is spent in friendship's calm security.  
 "These sober joys be mine, I ask no more."

The conclusion of all this long speaking is, that Clytemnestra prevails upon Agamemnon to accept the homage she offers him. He argues at first that so much honour is due only to the gods, but as Clytemnestra is so earnest in her reverence, he will not be unkind in disappointing her hopes; but lest he should injure the exquisite tapestries that she has had lain down for him to walk upon, he calls an attendant to remove the buskins from his feet. Agamemnon now enters the castle with Clytemnestra, followed by their train. During the procession the Chorus sing, presaging some calamity is about befalling, when Clytemnestra reappears, and invites Cassandra to enter also.

"CLYTEMNESTRA.

"Thou too, Cassandra, enter; since high Jove,  
 "Gracious to thee, hath plac'd thee in this house,  
 "With many slaves to share the common rites,  
 "And deck the altar of the fav'ring God.  
 "Come from that chariot, and let temperance rule  
 "Thy lofty spirit: e'en Alcmena's\* son,  
 "Sold as a slave, submitted to the yoke

---

\* Alcmena was the daughter of Electryon. Her mother's name was Anaxo, daughter of Alcæus, whose father was Perseus.

"Perforce; and if necessity's hard hand  
 "Hath sunk thee to this fortune, our high rank,  
 "With greatness long acquainted, knows to use  
 "Its pow'r with gentleness: the low-born wretch,  
 "That from his mean degree rises at once  
 "To unexpected riches, treats his slaves  
 "With barbarous and unbounded insolence.  
 "From us thou wilt receive a juster treatment."

Clytemnestra's speech makes no impression upon Cassandra, who keeps her seat in the car in which she has been brought hither; seeing this, Clytemnestra says—

"I have not leisure here before the gates  
 "T' attend on her; for at the inmost altar,  
 "Blazing with sacred fires, the victims stand  
 "Devoted to the Gods for his return  
 "So much beyond our hopes. If to comply  
 "Thus form thy mind, delay not: if thy tongue  
 "Knows not to sound our language, let thy signs  
 "Supply the place of words, speak with thy hand."

Finding Cassandra still inattentive and implacable, Clytemnestra says—

"'Tis frenzy this, the impulse of a mind  
 "Disorder'd; from a city lately taken  
 "She comes, and knows not how to bear the curb,  
 "'Till she has spent her rage in bloody foam.  
 "But I no more was't words to be disdain'd.

[*Exit* CLYTEMNESTRA.]

"CHORUS.

"My words, for much I pity her, shall bear  
 "No mark of anger. Go, unhappy fair one,  
 "Forsake thy chariot, reluctant learn  
 "To bear this new yoke of necessity.

"CASSANDRA.

"Woe, woe! O Earth! Apollo, O Apollo.

“ CHORUS.

“ Why with that voice of woe invoke Apollo ?  
“ Ill do these notes of grief accord with him.

“ CASSANDRA.

“ Woe, woe ! O Earth ! Apollo, O Apollo !

“ CHORUS.

“ Again her inauspicious voice invokes  
“ The God, whose ears are not attun'd to woe.

“ CASSANDRA.

“ Apollo, O Apollo, fatal leader,  
“ Yet once more, God, thou leadest me to ruin !

“ CHORUS.

“ She seems prophetic of her own misfortunes,  
“ Retaining, tho' a slave, the divine spirit.

“ CASSANDRA.

“ Apollo, O Apollo, fatal leader,  
“ Ah, whither hast thou led me ? to what house ?

“ CHORUS.

“ Is that unknown ? Let me declare it then :  
“ This is the royal mansion of th' Atridæ.

“ CASSANDRA.

“ It is a mansion hated by the Gods,  
“ Conscious to many' a foul and horrid deed :  
“ A slaughter-house, that reeks with human gore.

“ CHORUS.

“ This stranger seems, like the nice-scented hound,  
“ Quick in the trace of blood, which she will find.

"CASSANDRA.

"These are convincing proofs. Look there, look there,  
 "Whilst pity drops a tear, the children butcher'd,  
 "The father feasting on their roasted flesh !\*

"CHORUS.

"Thy fame, prophetic virgin, we have heard ;  
 "We know thy skill ; but wish no prophets now.

"CASSANDRA.

"Ye pow'rs of Heav'n, what does she now design?  
 "What new and dreadfull deed of woe is this ?  
 "What dreadfull ill designs she in the house,  
 "Intolerable, irreparable mischief,  
 "Whilst far she sends the succouring pow'r away ?†

"CHORUS.

"These prophecies surpass my apprehension :  
 "The first I knew, they echo thro' the city.‡

"CASSANDRA.

"Ah daring wretch, dost thou atchieve this deed,

\* This alludes to the children of Thyestes, which he had by Ærope, his brother Atreus's wife. Atreus, after discovering this intercourse, banished his brother Thyestes from Mycenæ, and afterwards invited him (under the semblance of a reconciliation) to his court, where he placed before Thyestes the roasted flesh of the children which were the result of the incestuous intercourse between him and Ærope.

† Orestes.

‡ The Chorus say they cannot comprehend both of the prognostications made by Cassandra. The one respecting the children they are acquainted with, as the circumstance has long been bruited about the city. They do not comprehend the meaning of the line—

"What dreadfull ill designs she in the house."

This is very natural, for who could imagine, after hearing Clytemnestra's adulations towards her husband, that she was prosecuting his assassination. The Chorus, of course, is ignorant of her proceedings ; but Cassandra, who is gifted with the power of prophecy, knows what is transpiring.



"Thus in the bath the partner of thy bed  
"Refreshing? How shall I relate th' event?  
"Yet speedy shall it be. E'en now advanc'd.  
"Hand above hand extended threatens high.

"CHORUS.

"I comprehend her not; her words are dark,  
"Perplexing me like abstruse oracles.

"CASSANDRA.

"Ha! What is that I see here before me  
"Is it the net of hell? Or rather her's,  
"Who shares the bed, and plans the murderous deed.  
"Let discord, whose insatiable rage  
"Pursues this race, howl thro' the royal rooms  
"Against the victim destined to destruction.

"CHORUS.

"What, Fury dost thou call within this house  
"To hold her orgies? The dread invocation  
"Appalls me; to my heart the purple drops  
"Flow back; a deathlike mist covers my eyes,  
"With expectation of some sudden ruin.

"CASSANDRA.

"See, see there; from the heifer keep the bull!—  
"O'er his black brows she throws th' entangling vest,  
"And smites him with her huge two-handed engine.  
"He falls, amidst the cleansing laver falls;  
"I tell thee of the bath, the treach'rous bath.

"CHORUS.

"T' unfold th' obscure oracles of Heav'n  
"Is not my boast; beneath the shadowing veil

---

\* This alludes to the double-sleeved garment which Clytemnestra had prepared, and is now throwing over Agamemnon to embarrass him while she seizes the axe to destroy him.

" Misfortune lies: When did th' inquirer learn  
 " From the dark sentence an event of joy?  
 " From time's first records the diviners voice.  
 " Gives the sad heart a sense of misery.

" CASSANDRA.

" Ah me unhappy? Wretched, wretched fate!  
 " For my own sufferings join'd call forth these wailings \*  
 " Why hast thou brought me hither? Wretched me!  
 " Is it for this that I may die with him?

" CHORUS.

" This is the frenzy of a mind possess'd  
 " With wildest ravings. Thy own waves thou wailest  
 " In mournfull melody; like the sweet bird,  
 " That darkling pours her never-ceasing plaint;  
 " And for her Atys, her lost Atys,† wasts  
 " In sweetest woe her melancholy life.

" CASSANDRA.

" Ah me! the fortune of the nightingale  
 " Is to be envied: on her light-pois'd plumes  
 " She wings at will her easy way, nor knows  
 " The anguish of a tear, whilst o'er my head  
 " Th' impending sword threatens the fatal wound,

" CHORUS.

" Whence is this violent, this wild presage  
 " Of ill? Thy fears are vain;‡ yet with a voice  
 " That terrifies, tho' sweet, aloud thou speakest

\* I am wailing for myself as well as for Agamemnon; for it is my unavoidable fate to be destroyed by the same hand that is now killing him.

† This alludes to Ismene, the daughter of Ædipus, who mourned the youth Atys, who was killed by Tydeus. Ismene and Atys were affianced.

‡ Have no meaning.

"Thy sorrows. Whence hast thou deriv'd these omens,  
 "Thus deeply mark'd with characters of death ?

"CASSANDRA.

"Alas the bed, the bridal bed of Paris,  
 "Destructive to his friends! Paternal stream,  
 "Scamander, on thy banks with careless steps  
 "My childhood stray'd: but now methinks I go,  
 "Alas, how soon! to prophesy around  
 "Cocytus,\* and the banks of Acheron!†

"CHORUS.

"Perspicuous this, and clear! the new-born babe  
 "Might comprehend it: but thy piercing griefs,  
 "Bewailing thus the miseries of thy fate,  
 "Strike deep; they wound me to my very soul.

"CASSANDRA.

"Ah my poor country, my poor bleeding country,  
 "Fall'n, fall'n for ever! And you, sacred altars,  
 "That blaz'd before my father's towred palace,  
 "Not all your victims cou'd avert your doom!  
 "And on the earth soon shall my warm blood flow.

"CHORUS.

"This is consistent with thy former ravings.  
 "Or does some God indeed incumbent press  
 "Thy soul, and modulate thy voice to utter  
 "These lamentable notes of woe and death ?  
 "What the event shall be, exceeds my knowledge.

\* A river in Epirus contiguous to the river Acheron, presided over by the Fury Alecto; hence the term *Cocytia virgo*.

† This, as well as the previous river, passes through Thesprotia, in Epirus; they are both occasionally called the rivers of hell, but the Acheron is that which is mostly considered so. It was Homer who propagated this fable; it is called the bitter stream over which the soul's of the wicked are conveyed to the infernal regions.

## "CASSANDRA.

"The oracle no more shall shroud its visage  
"Beneath a veil, as a new bride that blushes  
"To meet the gazing eye; but like the sun,  
"When with his orient ray he gilds the east,  
"Shall burst upon you with a flood of light,  
"Disclosing deeds of deeper dread. Away  
"Ye mystic coverings! And you, reverend men,  
"Bear witness to me, that with steady step  
"I trace foul deeds that smell above the earth.  
"For never shall that band, whose yelling notes  
"In dismal accord pierce th' affrighted ear,  
"Forsake this house. The genius of the feast,  
"Drunk with the blood of men, and fir'd from thence  
"To bolder daring, ranges thro' the rooms  
"Link'd with his kindred Furies: these possess  
"The mansion, and in horrid measures chaunt  
"The first base deed; recording with abhorrence  
"Th' adulterous lust, that stain'd a brother's bed.  
"What, like a skillfull archer have I lodg'd  
"My arrow in the mark? No trifling this,  
"T' alarm you with false sounds. But swear to me,  
"In solemn attestation that I know,  
"And speak the old offences of this house.\*

## "CHORUS.

"In such a rooted ill what healing pow'r  
"Resides there in an oath? But much I marvel  
"That thou the native of a foreign realm,  
"Of foreign tongue, canst speak our language freely,  
"As Greece had been thy constant residence.

## "CASSANDRA.

"Apollo grac'd me with this skill. At first  
"The curb of modesty was on my tongue.

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\* This all alludes to the original crimes with which the race of Atreus is cursed.

“CHORUS.

“Did the God feel the force of young desire?  
“In each gay breast ease fans the wanton flame.\*

“CASSANDRA.

“With all the fervor of impatient love  
“He strove to gratify my utmost wish.

“CHORUS.

“And didst thou listen to his tempting lures?

“CASSANDRA.

“First I assented, then deceiv'd the God.

“CHORUS.

“Wast thou then fraught with these prophetic arts?

“CASSANDRA.

“E'en then I told my country all its woes.

“CHORUS.

“The anger of the God fell heavy on thee?

“CASSANDRA.

“My voice for this offence, lost all persuasion.

“CHORUS.

“To us it seems a voice of truth divine.

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\* The Chorus asks Cassandra if Apollo inspired her with the power of prophecy in return for granting him her embraces. Her following reply is, that she promised to gratify him if he would endow her with this power; but after he had granted it she deceived and disappointed him; and the conversation goes on to show that, through her trifling with Apollo, she was afflicted with the misfortune of not being able to persuade any one to any act of either good or bad.

## "CASSANDRA.

"Woe, woe is me! Again the furious pow'r  
 "Swells in my lab'ring breast; again commands  
 "My bursting voice; and what I speak is Fate.—  
 "Look, look, behold those children.—There they sit;  
 "Such are the forms, that in the troubled night  
 "Distract our sleep.—By a friend's\* hands they died:  
 "Are these the ties of blood?—See, in their hands  
 "Their mangled limbs, horrid repast, they bear:  
 "Th' invited father shares th' accursed feast.  
 "For this the sluggard savage, that at ease  
 "Rolls on his bed, nor rouses from his lair,†  
 "'Gainst my returning lord, for I must wear  
 "The yoke of slavery, plans the dark design  
 "Of death.‡ Ah me! the chieftain of the fleet,  
 "The vanquisher of Troy, but little knows  
 "What the smooth tongue of mischief, filed to words  
 "Of glozing courtesy, with Fate her friend,  
 "Like Ate§ ranging in the dark can do  
 "Calmly: such deeds a woman dares: she dares  
 "Murder a man. What shall I call this mischief?  
 "An Amphisbæna?|| or a Scylla¶ rather,

\* By a relative's hands.

† These two lines are likening the perpetration of the deed to such as are pursued by the *Anthropophagi* or cannibals.

‡ "My returning lord," means my lord and master, who has returned hither; I am now his slave. She within (*Clytemnestra*) is planning my master's death.

§ She likens *Clytemnestra* to the goddess of evil, *Ate*, who created so much disturbance in heaven that her father, *Jupiter*, dragged her by the hair of her head from amongst her sisters, and thrust her upon earth to create commotion here amongst mortals.

|| The *Libyan*—two-headed venomous serpent.

¶ This *Scylla* was a daughter of *Phorcys*, sometimes spelt *Phorcus*. He was a sea deity, and father of several monsters; amongst whom the *Gorgon* sisters. *Scylla* became the victim of *Circe*, who was a daughter of *Sol* and *Perseis*; she was a great proficient in the knowledge of poisonous herbs, and when *Scylla* went to bathe, *Circe* placed some herbs into the water, which had the effect of changing the lower part of her body into the form of a dog with six heads, which constantly



"That in the vex'd rocks holds her residence,  
"And meditates the mariner's destruction?  
"Mother of Hell, 'midst friends enkindling discord  
"And hate implacable! With dreadfull daring  
"How did he shout, as if the battle swerv'd?  
"Yet with feign'd joy she welcomes his return.—  
"These words may want persuasion. What of that?  
"What must come, will come: and ere long with grief  
"Thou shalt confess my prophecies are true.

"CHORUS.

"Thyestes' bloody feast oft have I heard of,  
"Always with horror; and I tremble now  
"Hearing th' unaggravated truth. What else  
"She utters, leads my wand'ring thoughts astray  
"In wild uncertainty.

"CASSANDRA.

"Then mark me well,  
"Thou shalt behold the death of Agamemnon.

"CHORUS.

"To better omens tune that voice unblest'd,  
"Or in eternal silence be it sunk.

"CASSANDRA.

"This is an ill no medicine can heal.

"CHORUS.

"Not if it happens: but avert it, Heav'n!

---

barked. In each mouth were three rows of teeth, which so distressed the nymph that she threw herself into the sea, and was changed into a rock. The reason, Cassandra says, that Scylla meditates the mariner's destruction is, because that part of the coast of Sicily where the rock is located is a whirlpool, which causes a fearful roaring within the cavities of the rock.

"CASSANDRA.

"To pray be thine; the murd'rous deed is theirs.

"CHORUS.

"What man dares perpetrate this dreadfull act?

"CASSANDRA.

"How widely dost thou wander from my words?

"CHORUS.

"I heard not whose bold hand shou'd do the deed.

"CASSANDRA.

"Yet speak I well the language of your Greece.

"CHORUS.

"The gift of Phœbus this; no trivial grace.

"CASSANDRA.

"Ah, what a sudden flame comes rushing on me!

"I burn, I burn. Apollo, O Apollo!

"This lioness,\* that in a sensual sty

"Roll'd with the wolf,† the generous lion‡ absent

"Will kill me. And the sorceress, as she brews

"Her philtred cup, will drug it with my blood.

"She glories, as against her husband's life

"She whets the axe, her vengeance falls on him

"For that he came accompanied by me.—

"Why do I longer wear these useless honours,

"This laurel wand, and these prophetic wreaths?

"Away; before I die I cast you from me;

"Lie there, and perish; I am rid of you;

"Or deck the splendid ruin of some other.

---

\* Clytemnestra.

† Egisthus.

‡ Agamemnon.

"Apollo rends from me these sacred vestments,  
 "Who saw me in his rich habiliments  
 "Mock'd 'midst my friends, doubtless without a cause.  
 "When in opprobrious terms they jeer'd my skill,  
 "And treated me as a poor vagrant wretch,  
 "That told events from door to door for bread,  
 "I bore it all: but now the prophet God,  
 "That with his own arts grac'd me, sinks me down  
 "To this low ruin. As my father\* fell  
 "Butcher'd e'en at the altar, like the victim's  
 "My warm blood at the altar shall be shed:  
 "Nor shall we die unhonour'd by the Gods.  
 "He comes, dreadfull in punishment, the son†  
 "Of this bad mother, by her death t' avenge  
 "His murder'd father: Distant tho' he roams,  
 "An outcast and exile, by his friends  
 "Fenc'd from these deeds of violence, he comes  
 "In solemn vengeance for his father laid  
 "Thus low.—But why for foreign miseries  
 "Does the tear darken in my eye, that saw  
 "The fall of Ilium, and its haughty conq'rors  
 "In righteous judgement thus receive their meed?  
 "But forward now; I go to close the scene,  
 "Nor shrink from death. I have a vow in Heav'n:  
 "And further I adjure these gates of Hell,  
 "Well may the blow be aim'd, that whilst my blood  
 "Flows in a copious stream, I may not feel  
 "The fierce, convulsive agonies of death;  
 "But gently sink, and close my eyes in peace."

Cassandra is now about entering the castle, but starts back and says:—

"The scent of blood and death breaths from this house."

To this remark, the Chorus refers her to the fact, that—

\* Priam, king of Troy.

† Here she predicts that Orestes, though banished by his relatives from his native land, will shortly return, and avenge his father's death by destroying his own mother.

"The victims now are bleeding at the altar."

But this she will not have. No, no, says she—

"'Tis such a smell as issues from the tomb.  
 "Such tho' it be, I enter, to bewail  
 "My fate, and Agamemnon's. To have liv'd,  
 "Let it suffice. And think not, gen'rous strangers,  
 "Like the poor bird that flutters o'er the bough,  
 "Thro' fear I linger. But my dying words  
 "You will remember, when her blood shall flow  
 "For mine, woman's for woman's: and the man's,  
 "For his that falls by his accursed wife.  
 "Yet once more let me raise my mournfull voice.  
 "Thou Sun, whose rising beams shall bless no more  
 "These closing eyes! You,\* whose vindictive rage  
 "Hangs o'er my hated murderers, Oh avenge me,  
 "Tho', a poor slave, I fall an easy prey!  
 "This is the state of man: in prosperous fortune  
 "A shadow, passing light, throws to the ground  
 "Joy's baseless fabric: in adversity  
 "Comes malice with a sponge moisten'd in gall,  
 "And wipes each beauteous character away:  
 "More than the first this melts my soul to pity."

Cassandra now enters the castle, immediately upon which Agamemnon's voice is heard within, exclaiming:—

"Oh, I am wounded with a deadly blow.  
 "Wounded again, Oh, basely, basely murder'd.

"CHORUS.

"'Tis the king's cry; the dreadfull deed is doing.  
 "What shall we do? What measures shall we form?"

Shall we alarm the citizens, or by our own presence

\* The Furies.

attest the deed? They then stand questioning each other, in a state of alarm, not knowing how to proceed, when Clytemnestra enters, and boldly avows that she struck him twice, and that when he was dead, she gored him with another wound; then, showing her garments, she says: see how I am bedewed with his blood; I glory in the act. She now invites the Senators to join her in her exultations, for, says she, his pride

“Fill’d for this house the cup of desolation,  
“Fated himself to drain it to the dregs.”

The Chorus express themselves astonished at her daring words, and they ask her what frenzy could induce her cursed hands to strike the blow. Here she pleads as her justification, that Agamemnon doomed her daughter, Iphigenia, to bleed upon the altar; and, this act of mine, says she, is a just vengeance for his unholy deed. Then finding that the Senators are incensed against her, she puts on a bold front and says, now mark me well, I boldly tell you that I am prepared to try my fortune against the power vested in you; use your discretion, if you thwart me, I will teach you a lesson you least expect. They, in their turn, accuse her of vaunting pride, with being savage and stained with blood, and they threaten her with retribution. O, says she, I disdain your threats, for here I range without fear, whilst Ægisthus stands to guard me and my home;

“He is my shield, my strength, my confidence.”

He is left, the darling object of my wishes, whilst my base betrayer and his wanton harlot lie there wel-

tering in their blood. As she points towards the castle, the scene changes, and discovers the bodies of her victims. The Chorus, being dismayed by Clytemnestra's daring attitude, attempt to take the bodies to bury them, but are prevented by Clytemnestra, who says, that as she killed them she will bury them. Now Ægisthus enters, and finding that Clytemnestra has overawed the Senators, he speaks as follows:—

“From thee, who labourest at the lowest oar,  
 “This language, and to him that holds the helm!  
 “Thou shalt be taught, old man,\* what at thy age  
 “Is an hard lesson, prudence. Chains and hunger,  
 “Besides the load of age, have sovereign virtue  
 “To physic the proud heart. Behold this sight;  
 “Does it not ope thine eyes? Rest quiet then;  
 “Contend not with the strong; there's danger in it.”

Finding that between Ægisthus and herself, that they have intimidated the Senators, Clytemnestra turns to dissimulation, calling them “Dearest men,” and bids them retire to their homes in peace; what is done, says she, has been decreed by hard necessity, therefore, let these grievous afflictions fall on our heads, we are prepared to meet them; do not you disdain to be taught by me, though a woman. I slight your menaces, and regard them not. Now, says she (turning to Ægisthus) let us—

“Assume our state, and order all things well.”

Here ends the tragedy and Lecture 27.

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\* I address myself to all parties here, from the meanest to the highest; particularly to you “old man.” The last sentence is addressed to the leader of the Chorus, the Choriphæuse.



## LECTURE XXVIII.

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Now, my friends, let me once more turn to the subject of the creation, and as I promised you upon a former occasion that I would refer to Buffon's theory of the globe; I will do so, but first let me make a few remarks respecting Woodward's theory, and Whiston's notions. Woodward's imagination of the original formation of the earth immediately on its taking its present position is comprehensible, but quaint, he seems to have placed so much reliance upon the biblical records of the flood, that he destroys his conceived notions upon philosophy. He believed the surface of the earth is formed of a succession of deposits from subsiding waters (there is no great merit in this, for he who could think otherwise had better not trouble his pate to think at all). He persisted in believing that these layers of earth were universal in their nature, according to their gravities; so that if the globe were cut through it would be found something like an onion, coat over coat, in the following manner: for instance, first alluvial soil, then loose earth, then clay, then chalk, after which stone and metals. Likening the coats of the earth to an onion did not carry him right to the interior, for here he correctly considered it is a mass of molten fire, that is to say, quite the

interior of the globe. But he still treats the subject, as if the fire is first surrounded by a crust of terrene matter, then circumvented by water, then terrene matter again, forming into layers. The terrene parts he considers were invested with innumerable corpuscles and nodules, of the various descriptions of metals and minerals, including even saline and vitriol (the latter two he must mean in the form of salt, saltpetre, and sulphur). All these, he tell us, were, at first, mingled heterogeneously, but that they afterwards separated, according to their respective gravities, acted upon by the interior waters of the globe, thrusting the lighter ones higher up, and those waters sinking from the surface of the earth pressing the heavier ones down, so that when they arrive into sorted stratas they amalgamated, and formed into solid masses. No one can doubt the ingenuity of this theory, but the author of it destroyed it immediately he enters into the biblical part of his subject; for, he says, that at the Deluge everything was crumbled up, and was drifted about in a perfect jumble. Then again, that, after the whole became consolidated, the outer terrene shell cracked in various places, and allowed part of the waters to sink into the interior. What gave him this notion was simply the appearance of the mineral lodes in mines. The way he describes the Deluge is that when this uniform face of the globe existed, a large quantity of water, which had been confined in the interior of the earth, broke forth, and, joining the sea, so washed the solid parts of the globe about, that everything was in fragments and floating in the fluid, until after a time the soils and solids amalgamated again to their discriminate forms, and so the present appearance of

the world is produced. But there is a strange omission on his part; he does not say where the fire was all this time, so we are left to conjecture that he merely applied his theory to the coatings of the globe. The interior mass he must have meant was all this time in its position, and still attracting the general jumble to its body. I am not inclined now to follow this philosopher further into his description of the Deluge, but I will give you a few of Whiston's notions, and as I proceed with them I will tell you which I think probable and which not. To begin with, he considers that this world was originally a comet; so do I. He says that the scriptural history goes back to the period when it was first formed and placed in our solar system. This I very much doubt. He seems to think that, previous to its becoming one of the general system, it was running wild in the elements; I have no doubt of this. He thinks it was then a globe in disorder; I do not believe it had assumed any specific form at all until it was placed in our general system. He says that comets have been formed a thousand times hotter than melting iron, and a thousand times colder than ice. These ideas are, of course, imaginary, and it may afford you a little amusement in calculating exactly at what point of heat or cold Whiston commenced; perhaps when he was boiling with rage or freezing with horror. The heat the comet contained he considers it got from its primeval approximation to the sun, but he does not say it originally formed part of the sun. I believe it did. He considers that it was about 2,000 leagues in diameter. This of course is a conjecture. Then comes his peculiar notion, part of which I cannot think other than absurd and inconsistent. He says that the surface of the earth

(mark me, at the period he applies this notion the world is still a comet, or liquid fire) was constantly subject to extreme heat and cold. These extremes occasioned what he called a chaos. So far so good; but then he spoils all by saying that this chaos extended to the dimensions I have before named, 2,000 leagues, and formed part of the burning mass. With this notion the cold that he surrounded the first fire by, to produce this chaos, must soon have got to boiling heat by the central mass, and so the chaos must have kept further cold out. The chaos here described as forming part of the burning mass he considers still in a very fluid form, in fact "thin fluid," and that it contained various substances which were constantly agitated against each other. This is the state he describes the world in at the eve of its creation, nearly repeating the same organisation at the Deluge. The world's orbit being now changed, he places it in our regular system, and he describes the solid masses as beginning to settle into their respective situations, and he goes so far as to state (which he carries out by calculations) that the heat in the centre of the mass will be retained there for about six thousand years longer. This is another conjecture of his, which I think I need not remind you is a mere hypothesis. He thinks that the vapours (which he calls a chaos), as they settled, were not entirely separated from the watery parts, and that large quantities of water were condensed within the interior; and as they could not after this make their way to the surface, being covered by the consolidated crust, they circumvented the entire interior mass; thus he makes it appear that the interior is a burning mass upon which is consolidated a terrene substance, then surrounded by water, after which it is

again enclosed by a layer of terrene substance, round which he places the atmosphere. Then comes another peculiarity of his. He thinks that the hills and valleys are formed by the pressure of the outer coating upon the yielding mass of water, the heavier bodies sinking whilst the lighter bodies rise and form the mountains. Were he correct in this notion I think we should find that the whole surface of the globe would be constantly undulating, and instead of hearing of earthquakes occasionally taking place in certain parts of the world, we should be visited by these catastrophes constantly and universally; so I do not agree with Whiston in this particular. At this period of the world's history he thinks that mankind and animals existed, but he does not account for their creation. He sets down the tenure of their life as ten times the duration of the present creation. This he attributed to the heat in the centre of the globe being then ten times greater than it is now. Upon this calculation, as he estimates the interior heat to be constantly cooling and likely to be entirely exhausted at the end of six thousand years, he must, of course, calculate that animal and vegetable life will continue to decrease, not only in extent but in duration. This being his notion, I wonder much how he would account for the constant increase in the census of nearly all the civilised inhabited parts of the globe. He says that prior to the Deluge the interior heat was in full power, and that the genial principle occasioned a constant increase of vegetable and animal life, which produced a moral evil as it increased, and invigorated the passions and desires of man's mind; so that his becoming more powerful made him less innocent, and in consequence of his depravity the Lord punished him



with an universal deluge. He further goes on to describe the very day of the world's creation, and on which day it was destroyed, which took place, he says, by being involved in the tail of a comet, which he describes as being a vapourous fluid occasioned by the heat of the sun. This was attracted by our globe, and at the same time the interior waters of the earth were let loose, and so occasioned an universal desolation, excepting Noah and his family, who were saved for the purpose of repeopling the earth. These extra waters from the comet's tail he thinks increased the dimensions of the globe; that part of them again flowed into the interior cavities, and that the remainder continued upon the surface, finding a level by sinking into the great abyss, which he calls the sea. The thought of destruction can scarcely carry us further, excepting it be in the following lines, which I here compose for your edification:—

Chaos yawns, the gulf is deep,  
Worlds come tumbling from the steep  
Vault of heaven, there on high;  
Hark! the crash! doomsday is nigh.  
Stars now fall, extinguished all,  
Except the radiant sun.  
See there, the moon, the planets, too,  
Come rushing on in one fell crew,  
Creation's crush'd, all is over,  
Except one God, Great Jehovah!

That there is water in the interior of the earth, no one for a moment doubts; but that it exists there, in the manner stated by Whiston, I think, is unquestionably an error; my impression is, that there are innumerable pools, lakes, and even rivers, in the inte-



rior of the globe, at all depths, from the spring that percolates near to the very surface, to the hot wells, which may, for aught we know, be set boiling by the centre fire itself. Some people might ask, how it is that we never ascertain this for a fact? Why, it is easily answered,—the large bodies of waters of course lay deeper in the earth than it would be safe for mortals to go; besides which, the operations, required to go deeper than our engineers now do, would become too extensive, expensive, and insecure. Then, after all, if the operatives came near the vicinity of one of these lakes the water would overtake and so overwhelm them, that their approach again to the surface of the earth would be very doubtful; we have daily proofs of this theory by the operations going on in the various mines, and by the wells we sink for ordinary use; in the latter there being this difference, that you may sink a well and get it full of water drained from the earth in its vicinity without there being any spring at all; this is surface water, which is retained in the soil itself, without ever having reached any body of water. The mineral, chalybeate, and saline waters we get are probably produced in like manner, their properties being attributable to the description of earth or earths they pass through; some of them are impregnated by the beds of the pools or lakes from which they spring. I am of opinion that the sea itself is salt, from the saline nature of many parts of its bed; and who can doubt but that there are many fissures and yawning cavities amongst rocks and at the bottom of the sea, through which the waters flow into various parts of the interior of the earth. The tides are partially occasioned by the world's rolling upon its

axis, and, by the same rule, may not the interior waters occasionally break through obstructions and join other pools, and so occasion earthquakes or subsidings of the earths' surface; and some volcanic eruptions may be occasioned by fire and water coming into contact with each other. Some rivers have their sources from the sea, and flow into the interior of countries, others have originally been formed from mere brooks, and, by a variety of circumstances, gone on increasing, until they have ultimately forced their way into the ocean; these having the flow towards the sea seldom receive the tide, or if they do not all their length, even those rivers that flow from the ocean do not all of them experience the tide to their extreme limit; this is to be attributed to the decrease of the river in dimensions, and to the shallowness of the bed, mainly to the continuous breaks in the flow of waters. Now, to take up the other extreme, how rivulets are often formed and so extend into large streams; some occur from springs, others from surface drainage, which mainly originates with the clouds, for water is a vapour condensed into a fluid, and so deposited upon the surface of the earth, then by its constant liquification, it collects as rapidly as it falls, and so forms into streams; when, by its own gravity, it finds a level by forcing its way into hollows, and it receives an uniform pressure of atmosphere upon its surface; this is a simple fact, and must be clear to every one, for do we not find that where water is collected in large quantities, there it is where the greater agitation takes place. The surface of all waters are influenced by the atmosphere; a cup of water is still because its surface is limited, and, when in the house, the action of the air is a downward pressure,

rather than a ruffling current passing over it, this may be seen by placing the same small cup of water in the open air, when a difference is at once perceptible if any wind is stirring; so also a well, which is deep in the ground, contains its water perfectly silent, and never freezes because the air does not get to its surface sufficiently. Rivers that are formed in curves and angles, have some of their reaches almost dormant, whilst others are rippling, and some quite rough at the surface; these differences may be occasioned by the unevenness of the bed of the river, but supposing the bed to be pretty equal, and the water too deep for it to have any influence upon the surface of the stream, then the different reaches would be agitated exactly in accordance to the current of air acting upon them, influenced according to the direction of the wind and the flow of the stream.

I now come to the philosopher Buffon, in whom I place more reliance than all the rest put together. Indeed I may as well be candid, and acknowledge at once that nearly all he has advanced seems to me the achme of consistency, reason, and common sense. I may therefore be excused if I express my doubts upon the previous theories which I have described to you, and by the same rule I claim the right to express my dissatisfaction at Oliver Goldsmith's cavillings respecting mere trifles. He admits, to begin with, that Buffon was "better qualified" than all the rest to lay down a theory, but at the same time he qualifies his remark by saying that the "weaker" parts of Buffon's admirable work were his being in possession of more materials than his predecessors (he meant, of course, their theories to guide him) he admits that Buffon had a "brighter imagina-

tion" than the rest, and that his style is better clothed; yet he has the perversity to say, that these qualifications are the causes of the weakest parts of his admirable work. I must confess that this reasoning puzzles me, whilst Buffon's theory seems to me simple, concise, and more conclusive (with two exceptions) than all the rest; the only thing Goldsmith successfully points out as an omission, on the part of Buffon, is that our philosopher omitted to account for our finding occasionally fossil remains of vegetation, such as trunks of trees, or, to bring these phenomena more familiar to your notions, let me tell you that Goldsmith alludes to what you understand as bogwood; I dare say many of my fair friends present have some of this with them in the shape of ornaments. Well, I am free to admit that Buffon does not account for bogwood, and deeper buried trees; but this does not satisfy me that he could not have done so had the circumstance occurred to him; his omission only goes to prove that no man is infallible; however, admitting this omission on the part of Buffon, and as I think I know pretty nearly what his thoughts were I will myself venture to explain his omission by-and-by; but for the present let us first finish with Goldsmith's objections, and go through Buffon's theory. Goldsmith says, that Buffon ought to have "been content with giving facts instead of theories." Why the stupid fellow here entirely loses himself, for the facts he alludes to are reminiscences of other theories, whilst Buffon's theory is the most plausible fact upon record. Now let me not be misunderstood, for it is far from my wish to put Oliver Goldsmith down as any other than a very clever writer, but a great authority, I do not

consider him, so let us excuse his finding fault with Buffon, and applaud him for his candour in admitting that he is an "ill-qualified judge." Buffon conjectures, I myself have not a shadow of doubt upon it, that the earth and planets were originally parts of the sun. I think that comets are also, and that the cause of their rapid and extensive circuits in space is to be attributed to their shape, they being yet in a state of elastic commotion, and, I think that the various discoveries of new planets that have been made from time to time, have been occasioned by the progress of comets being arrested by condensation, and the attraction of the sun's centre, and so become visible to us when they have taken their natural places in the heavens. I may here remark, that although I admit the delight I feel in Buffon's general description, I am constrained to confess I do not admire the cause he assigns for the effect; he says that this planet originated by a comet coming into contact with the sun, and by the shock, parts of the sun were thrown off. Why did he not more reasonably suppose that the comet was dashed to pieces? This is one of the two parts of Buffon's theory which I do not agree in, for the idea at once destroys the power of gravity. The comet he alludes to, must in the first instance have fallen from the sun, and unless its dimensions were so small that it could not find a centre of gravity opposed to the sun's attraction; it would have been at once attracted towards a planet, or if it was attracted back to its parent body, it could not have created much of a shock; in fact, I am of opinion that comets are still in their original molten state, and if Buffon's comet ever was attracted back to the sun, it must at once have anal-



gamated as one fluid, instead of causing such a concussion as to displace any of the larger body ; my notion is, that the planets (always supposing this world one of them) have from time to time been thrown off the sun (in the form of comets) occasioned by the sun's own internal eruptions ; that the comets have traversed space until, by degrees, the vapours through which they have passed have condensed them ; and ultimately they have become transfixed, surrounded by their own condensation, attracted by the sun's centre, and so stationed as an unit in the general system. Now, by what I have said you may clearly see that I cling to Buffon's theory more than I do to any other, although not entirely so ; he thought it probable that at first there existed only the sun, a comet or some comets, and chaos ; that a comet came into contact with the sun, in consequence of which the concussion occasioned several particles of the sun, like sparks, to be thrust into space ; each of these sparks, he thinks, might have been some as large and others larger than this world. Now, abandoning the comet and concussion part of Buffon's theory, I will, for sake of my own argument, take up his notion, that the planets are particles of the sun ; that they were thrown off, and continued to progress until they were arrested as I before stated. The various motions of the planets are to be attributed to their respective forms, our own globe once being somewhat of an oval, inclined to the shape of a spinning top, without the peg, [its spinning motion upon its own axis having been given it by an oblique impulsion into chaos ;] it progressed in a wild career until it was arrested in like manner to what I have already described, and, that when it settled into position, its spiral end fell into its



centre, and created a polar force right through it, so that by a greater pressure at each of its polar sides, it has assumed somewhat the form of an orange, continues its spinning motion, and travels with the rest of the planets round the sun. It is but right I should mention to you, ere I proceed further, that this idea occurred to me long before I read Buffon's work, and immediately I came across this part of his theory I went through some of my old scraps of manuscript, amongst which I found one on which I had set down my ideas; so it will scarcely be wondered at my following out the greater part of Buffon's principles. Now having the mass of liquid fire of which the earth was at first composed, into position, we must suppose that the vapours surrounding it condensed it, so as to cool its outer surface, and that these vapours, settling upon the world by its attraction; no doubt, occasioned considerable commotion upon the still yielding mass, creating undulations, and ultimately depositing a sediment upon the entire surface of the whole mass. I am of opinion that the world remained covered with water for ages, and that the fossil remains such as shells and marine formations which we occasionally come across in the interior, I firmly believe were collected by natural causes, and became buried by fresh deposits from the outer fluid, this may have occurred again, and again. The waters then subsiding (partly by evaporation occasioned by the heat of the sun) into the cavities and undulated parts, other parts became dry. We need not suppose that these must necessarily have been the tops of mountains, for whole chains of these tracts might have bedded the water into some parts, whilst it left both hills and valleys free from the larger mass of fluid

which had collected and formed the seas. The sun's rays, now falling on the sediments that had been deposited, created vegetation and life in various forms. I am of opinion, that before the present race of mankind were in existence, several eruptions of the world took place, and that it has changed its surface aspect just as often. It is from these circumstances that I consider the various stratas of minerals and soils have taken place; it is particularly apparent that such must have been the case, and that internal undulations have also been going on, for this is equally apparent by the various cross and disjointed lodes of minerals and metals that are found in opposite directions. We now come in like manner to account for our frequently finding fossil timber, and matters originally of a vegetating nature; these were doubtless destroyed in districts where inundations from time to time have taken place; and to sum up the whole, I think we may come to a fair conclusion, that these things have been going on in the world for indefinite periods, and that many phases of animal, as well as vegetable life, have been destroyed and reorganised in as many other forms. A word or two in conclusion, I do not think that at the time the Deluge (alluded to in the Bible) occurred, the whole face of the globe was ravaged; but as I have treated upon this subject elsewhere, and as I am still anxious to steer as clear as I possibly can of theological questions, I will conclude this article for the present, with the following lines:—

So nature by the sun was formed,  
And in the course of time destroyed;  
Nations thus have oft been stormed,  
And thus the globe has been alloyed

With fire, water, life and soil,  
Alluvial forms and mineral,  
Till all in turn have been despoiled,  
And all at length a funeral.

Now, as regards the principle which I have just described to you, let me explain why I come to this conclusion, my argument is by analogy, and deducible from the combined influences which have come to our knowledge, for instance, let us suppose the sun a body of molten fire, condensed into its position by the air surrounding it, although (as I shall afterwards show you) this condensation must be widely different to that which encompasses our orb, for the sun being a ball of fire, its rays of heat must expand the air in every direction; yet it is retained in its position by the fact of its rays darting forth equally, and at every point alike, and back again by compression, still governed by the universal principle of gravitation. Well, then, this being the state of the sun, we will suppose that a piece of its enormous bulk is detached, the principle of gravitation instantly commences, and the part disengaged flies off, at first, at an incalculable velocity, as it is influenced by all the active powers at their highest pitch, propulsion, occasioned by the eruption of the sun; gravitation, the general law of attraction, and the expansion of the air, occasioned by the heat of the detached part of the sun (or call it a comet) as it passed through space; and it was not until its rays of heat became exhausted, that it finally settled into position condensed by the air surrounding it. Its surface being now cold, and its heat driven into the interior, its outer part became a terrene substance. It may be asked how is this; I will tell you. Air, you must understand, is an elastic fluid, and as all

bodies of organic matter are surrounded by it, the respective powers are equal over the entire surface of the body acted upon—pressure (the weight of the atmosphere) and natural resistance. This resistance is solidity and occasions gravitation, a permanent and indestructible principle. Thus it is compression takes place, condensation ensues, and matter becomes permanent; so it was that the comet (our world) became an unit in the universal system of the universe. I have said I would explain to you why it is that the atmosphere surrounding the sun is different to that which encompasses us. The sun, being an ignited body so vastly greater than this globe is, is inextinguishable; its rays, being constant and equal in every direction, always heats the air as it approaches and causes it to expand, so that its elastic nature gives way just in proportion to the quantity of heat given out by the rays of the sun. Yet though these sun rays expand the atmosphere they do not entirely displace it; its mass is driven to a greater distance, but the force of compression acts equally strong, though at a distance from the actual body of the sun, for this reason, though the heat expands the volume of air it comes into contact with, that which is heated is immediately chilled again by the volumes of cold air which rushes into the heated air, and so it is constantly being heated and condensed. The stronger the heat the greater the condensation to the air by a corresponding chill, occasioned by the more rarified atmosphere, which has not at the moment been acted upon by the sun; in fact, were it not for the intervening atmosphere between the sun and the world, the surface of the earth would be rekindled, and this orb would again become a comet; after throwing off its

outer coating of terrene substances the waters would be dispersed into air ; the marine, the geological, and the organic parts of creation would be distributed by fractions, and minute particles into space, until they were attracted by other bodies, and, the interior fire which is now confined (occasioned originally through condensation) would at once break loose and rush wildly into the elements, in similar manner to what it did when it was first cast from the sun ; but, in spite of Dr. Cumming's speculative and fallacious prognostications, I am little inclined to imagine this will ever transpire. We are firmly condensed into our position, and though occasional eruptions of our surface takes place, they are to such an insignificant extent compared to the whole body of the globe, that we need not fear an universal combustion.

Astronomical pursuits transpired ever since the dawn of civilization, but it was not until observations were registered, and compared from place to place by the philosophers who pursued the study, that the art of Astronomy could be considered in the light of a science. The most ancient observations that have been handed down to us, with accuracy, are those that transpired at Babylon, in the years 719 and 720 B.C., particularly pertaining to the phases of the moon, which was eclipsed three time during the stated period. *Claudius Ptolemæus* is our authority, for he describes the circumstances in his "Almagest;" to him we are also indebted for a work known as the *Ptolemaic Geography*, in which he has lain down the principles of longitude and latitude of places, other works have been written by him, upon astronomy ; besides his being the projector of map making. He flourished during the reign of Antonius



and Adrian. It is a singular fact, that the almost universal opinion is, that the discovery of the sphericity of the globe took place in the sixteenth century of the present era ; but, however far this notion may be correct in practice, it is quite certain that the principle had been advanced above 2200 years previously, although not clearly defined. Thales, of Miletus, who was (as I have before told you) the founder of the Ionian school, first introduced the notion on his return to Greece from Egypt, about 600 years B.C., and the same idea was cultivated by Anaxagoras, but he was not permitted to propound his science, for the priests persecuted him, denouncing him as being instrumental in destroying the influence of the gods. Anaxagoras was banished from Athens, and would have been handed over to the fury of an illiterate mob, had not the more enlightened Pericles interfered, and saved him ; yet so fast had priestcraft hold upon the general understanding, that even the influence of this great politician (Pericles) could not avail so as to induce the Athenians to permit the philosopher to remain in the country. This occurred about the period about 420 B.C., 130 years previous to this, Pythagoras (who was the first disciple of Thales) endeavoured to teach the Athenians the same doctrine, on his return from Egypt, where he had been studying, but they would not have it, and he was compelled to secure his safety in flight ; he then retired into Italy, where he established his celebrated school, and taught the same principles as had been laid down by Thales. After Pythagoras, came Philolaus, who more openly taught the principles of his teacher : he propounded the notion that the comets were in regular motion round the sun as well as the



planets ; and about the middle of the first century of the present era, the unfortunate philosopher, Seneca, said we ought not to wonder at our ignorance of the movements of the comets, for their appearances are so rare, and their distances from us (in which they perform their revolutions) so great, that it is out of our power to calculate. Seneca, at the same time, alluded to the fact, that 1,500 years had not then elapsed, since the idea first originated with the Grecians, to set out the constellations, so as to make a complete study of the stars. The day will come, said this great man, when what now we look at with wonder, will be reduced to rules, as certain as we know the sun to be the centre of our system. It is now about 1,800 years since Seneca said this, but with all our extraordinary advances, we have not yet arrived at the fact of knowing accurately what are the orbits of the comets, or if they have defined orbits at all ; nor do we know if the other doctrine, set out by the same school, be correct or not ; for it was Pythagoras and his associates who first gave us to understand that the planets are inhabited. You must understand, at no one time can we see more than five of the planets with the naked eye, and it is from their quick and constant motions, in the heavens, that they are called “wanderers ;” this word originated with the Greeks, and is *πλαναμ*, correctly translated *to wander*. The planets, in conjunction with the earth (which is also one) all revolve round the sun in regular orbits, but on account of the great distance from us, in which space the comets move we do not know for certain (although the impression is almost universal) if they revolve round the sun at regular distances from it or not ; continuing in my opinion, that it is not

until their wild careers are arrested by condensation ; that they do perform regular revolution, I think it is too much to say, they are all regular in their movements, although I believe they are more or less so. The fixed stars are at greater distances from us than the planets, consequently we cannot (with our present instruments) ascertain if they make orbits or not, my idea is that they do, and that they revolve upon their axis also. The motion of the planets round the sun is elliptical, which rule was brought into practice by Kepler, about the beginning of the 17th century, although it should not be forgotten that the notion (like that of the sphericity of the globe) originated with the Pythagorean school, commencing with Thales, who was the first founder of those sciences, which, afterwards, were more generally attributed to Pythagoras.

The Asteroids are small planets, at such great distances from us that they appear smaller than those which are the eight principal ones, viz., this Earth, Venus, Jupiter, Mars, Mercury, Uranus, Saturn, and Neptune. The Asteroids were none of them observed (at all events, not taken into account) until within the last sixty-three years. These make their appearance between the orbits of Jupiter and Mars, principally in the region of the Zodiac, and are very numerous. Amongst them are those named Vesta, Pallas, Juno, and Ceres ; the last named here (Ceres) was discovered soon after the year 1800, by M. Piazzi, at Palermo. Besides these heavenly bodies which I have described to you, there are nineteen satellites which revolve round the planets ; for instance, the moon is our satellite ; Neptune has one moon or satellite revolving round him, in an elliptical orbit ; and it is thought that

there are others in distinct orbits round him. Then the planet Jupiter, has four satellites ; Uranus (or Herschel) has six, and Saturn has seven. We are fully acquainted with the orbit of our own Earth and her satellite ; for instance, the diameter of our earth's orbit is about one hundred and ninety millions of miles, and that of the moon four hundred and eighty thousands of miles. Now, let me remind you that if the comets have orbits at all, they must be of a parabolic character, and although three of them at least, *Halley's*, *Biela's*, and *Encke's*; have regular orbits, this rule is qualified by the remark "proportionably," which I take to mean comparatively. Some have ventured to describe the orbits of six comets, and they now contemplate describing a seventh, but I doubt the accuracy of these cometary calculations. How can any one say that all the comets perform regular orbits, whilst we know that they some of them approach the sun, and, at other periods, are so far distant that they are lost to our view altogether. It was observed that the comet of 1843 approached so near towards the sun that it was within 3,500 miles of it, when it rushed by at the rate of 64,000 miles a second, branching abruptly off, and was soon lost to view. This was a problem never solved, for if the comet had continued at that speed in a direction towards the sun, another fraction of a second (about the 19th part) they would have come into contact ; but, I take it that, the sun threw out a fresh force of repellance, and sent the comet into space upon its own rotation in an opposite direction, and it was lost in the immensity of space.

We all agree that the planets (like our earth) are opaque, but the notions regarding the comets are so

vague as to induce some (wonderfully clever men) to think they are mere vapours, transparent and particularly rarefied in their character. I confess my practical knowledge upon the science of astronomy is nothing compared to what some of our learned philosophers have had, but I cannot alter my opinion respecting these strange visitants. I have said before that I think they are (what I believe this earth was) particles of the sun in a molten state, flying off wildly in space ; without regular orbit, or atmosphere of their own. Time alone will bring them into position by their cooling and creating their own condensation, into which they will settle, and (doubtless) ultimately become an unit in the universal system. Comets' tails, I imagine, are elongated parts of their own bodies, occasioned by their rapid progress through the heavens ; these elongations I do not think extend near so far as they appear, because I consider the larger part of the tails are occasioned by the rays of light they leave behind them, which, of course, darts through the tail, and so makes them appear, to us, of much greater length than they actually are. Then, as regards the transparency of these tails (as described by many learned men) my impression is, that the transparent parts are merely those appearances which are the rays of light I have just named to you. I admit, when passing over many of the brighter stars which we know of, we can see them through these rays of the comet's light, but our greatest men are sometimes deceived in the number of stars described through a comet's tail. I believe these appearances are partly occasioned by numerous particles or sparks thrown off the mass itself, occasioned by friction, as it passes through the elements.

It may be asked, how is it if the comets travel so swiftly we sometimes continue to see them so long? An answer to such is soon given, inasmuch as this, we must first of all take into consideration the immense distance these bodies are from us, and often, when we see them longest, we ourselves are travelling in the same, or partly in the same direction, then it may be asked how is it if the comet's fly so rapidly that we cannot see them move? My answer to this is to the practised eye some of these and other bodies in the heavens are seen to move, or if this be a delusion (as I know some people may say it is) let us answer the question thus: it is no wonder we cannot detect the movements of these bodies as they progress, for we ourselves are travelling or flying through space at the rate of 19 miles every second, or 1,140 miles a minute, besides which all the time we are thus flying our body is spinning upon itself, at a velocity which enables it to perform a complete revolution in 24 hours, yet to our equilibrium there is not the slightest effect of the motion. How is this? I will tell you. The surface of the globe is so great (200,000,000 miles), whilst each of us occupy only such a minute space upon its surface, that we do not feel its motion; besides which you must not forget that gravitation is constantly operating upon us, and that we are steadily attracted towards the centre of the globe, so that in fact we (as it were) almost form part of the globe itself, and this same principle pervades all creatures, even those that have wings and are enabled to soar above us to the very extent of our vision, for they, one and all, return to the surface. Nor can they exist beyond the elements that surround us; in fact they cannot go to the extent of these limits, for as



they ascend they have less power over themselves, and they have, by instinct, to keep within the elements that exist near to the globe, or they would drop powerless and paralysed upon it.

I may be here allowed to revert to a circumstance which affords me both pleasure and pain. It was entirely through the circumstance of my writing this work that I became acquainted with the late Sir Charles Aldis, who complimented me by desiring the cultivation of our friendship, but he died in less than a year of our acquaintance.\*

On reading the article I introduced at the end of my second series upon the subject of astronomy, my good friend Sir Charles Aldis writes me that he intends quoting some of my remarks, but he does not say if he entirely accords with them or not, yet from his otherwise expressed compliments, and by comparing what I have written upon the subject to what he has penned, I am inclined to think we shall not materially differ. Sir Charles has also forwarded me a pamphlet, from which I gather that the following notions have existed at various periods respecting comets, that they have been created to "recruit the heat expended by the sun in warming the planets;" "that they are planets themselves, only moving in more eccentric orbits;" "that they are the abodes of the damned," "the habitations of the blessed;" "they are balls of fire, formed by concentrated solar light, firmly condensed;" "that they are thrown from sun to sun by the repellency of the light that strikes on them;" "they are meteors of a larger size;" that "they are opaque," "transparent," "water," "ice."

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\* The following article was written before his death but not published.



“One of them was the cause of the Deluge,” this was strongly affirmed by Whiston “that another may produce the conflagration;” this means the entire consumption of this globe by fire, and “that one came into contact with the sun, struck off a piece of it, which formed the globe on which we live;” this I have already explained to you, and I think I have given you a fair reason why such could not be the case. I have therefore no hesitation in expressing my opinion that Whiston is wrong. Then Sir Charles facetiously remarks that “Dr. Spintext” gave his opinion that comets are “*luminous bodies of light* ;” he further adds that his friend “Dr. Pottingen” designated them “*corpora ignea in vacuo bombulantia*,” and that his other learned friend “Count Reginald de St. Lion” has translated “Pottingen’s” Latin phrase into the following sentence, “comets are fiery meteors, sporting in empty space.” Aldis further goes on to compare comets to women, by telling us that they are both lovely, both bewitching, and both enchanting. And he adds that Eve damn’d mankind for sake of an apple, that Troy was destroyed through Helena, and the world lost to Mark Anthony through Cleopatra. All these inferences and suggestions are very amusing, but the most useful part of Sir Charles’s pamphlet is that in which he quotes the opinions of various philosophers; he says that Page tells us the comet of 1858 is the same as that which was seen here in 1681, and as Sir Charles ventures to give us some of his own opinions upon this head, I will be equally candid and state where I agree with my friend, and where I do not. He says that comets are planets, but he does not tell us how they are formed, I think they are particles

of the sun thrown into space, and that the reason all their courses cannot be accurately described is, from the fact of their not yet having been condensed (as it were) into a palpable form, and through the inconceivable distance from us through which they take their tracks. Haller says that the courses of comets are reducible, so does Sir Charles, and they both agree that the comets of 1305, 1456, 1607, and 1682, are all one and the same. If these conjectures be correct, it goes in a measure to confirm a former opinion I have expressed, that some (at least) of the comets have neither regular courses, nor do they traverse space at an even rate of speed. Sir Charles agrees with Sir Isaac Newton that the tails of comets are formed by a vapoury atmosphere rarified by the sun. If this be the case, it is just probable that Whiston was correct in stating that the Deluge of this globe was occasioned by the tail of a comet passing over us. The great objection I have to this theory is, that I think if ever two heavenly bodies did come into contact with each other, nothing less than a total eruption of both must have taken place, and that an almost immediate amalgamation must have ensued, occasioned by the natural power of attraction, in fact, that although both planets (for argument sake) were totally dismembered of their respective properties, rocks being divided from earth, earth from water, water from rock, yet the power of attraction would soon draw all the particles together again, for this reason, the propulsion could not have been so great as to force any part of this world towards other planets, for if so, we should not have our globe in its present regular form, it would be merely a comet, wild and irregular in its transit. I think this is in a

measure confirmed by the assertion that if the Deluge has at all taken place, and we have been driven to other planets, we should know nothing of that world which we left. Well then, as all this is impossible to our comprehension, what is more certain than that if two bodies ever did come into contact with each other, they must have amalgamated, and the centres of attraction must have been the larger masses; then again the largest mass would have attracted all the rest. Whiston tells us, that after the Deluge the world increased in size, this increase he accounts for by the water from the comet's tail, but he does not say what became of the comet. Now my friends pray understand me. I merely use this as a relative argument, and I hope you see some reason in what I am saying, but to be plain and candid, I tell you that I think the notion about worlds ever having come into contact, or likely to, is vague altogether. The assertion of Plutarch that the Deluge, we are told of, was occasioned by the overflowing of the Nile, is to my thinking, the most consistent, for I am quite satisfied that all the races of men we know of, are not the descendants of one family. Besides, the most ingenious writer in the world could not show us how communications all over the globe have been made between the races so as to bring us back to the descendants of Noah, and his family. We have been, I think, as indigenous to respective soils as other animals have been. The inter-breeding of mankind has been occasioned by his migrating habits, and, by force of example, one original tale has wandered almost all over the world. Sir Charles agrees with Sir Isaac Newton that the tails of comets are formed by a va-

poury atmosphere rarefied by the sun, I think they are principally the light from the comet, and partly elongations of the comet itself, occasioned by the rapid transit of the mass of liquid fire of which they are composed. To do Sir Charles credit, let me tell you that he differs with Sir Isaac in his theory "that the heat of comets is after a time exhausted, and they fall back into the sun." To me this notion seems simply ridiculous, for if it were the case, or ever has been, we should either see it or have been told of it by the ancients; at all events, I do not believe that such a thing has ever occurred since this world has been inhabited by intellectual beings. Then again Sir Charles says that Dr. Darwin and other philosophers, who have asserted that this earth is a *sun shute*, "are chimerical." In this I differ with Sir Charles, for I believe, most firmly, that it, and all the rest of the planets are dismembered parts of the sun, and nothing else; the only chimerical part of Darwin's theory in this respect is that in which he states that these "shutes" have occasioned the "specky" appearance of the sun's face. Then Hevelius tells us that the nucleus, or heads of comets, are transparent, and that the sun's rays pass through them, which forms the appearance of the tails. I need not add that I do not form the same opinion. Walker says that this idea is "ingenious," and Sir Charles very properly remarks that it cannot be correct.\*

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\* Since writing the above, and receiving the approbation of Sir Charles Aldis, it is my painful duty to remark that death has called one of the kindest and most genial souls to account. Sir Charles Aldis died suddenly of an attack of bronchitis, a fortnight after the interview herein alluded to.

I now finish this, my Twenty-eighth Lecture, and for this season I must take my leave of you for a few weeks, bidding you farewell until next we meet.

END OF THIRD SERIES.











